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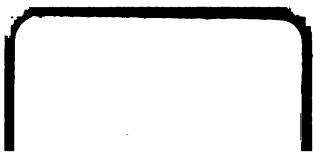
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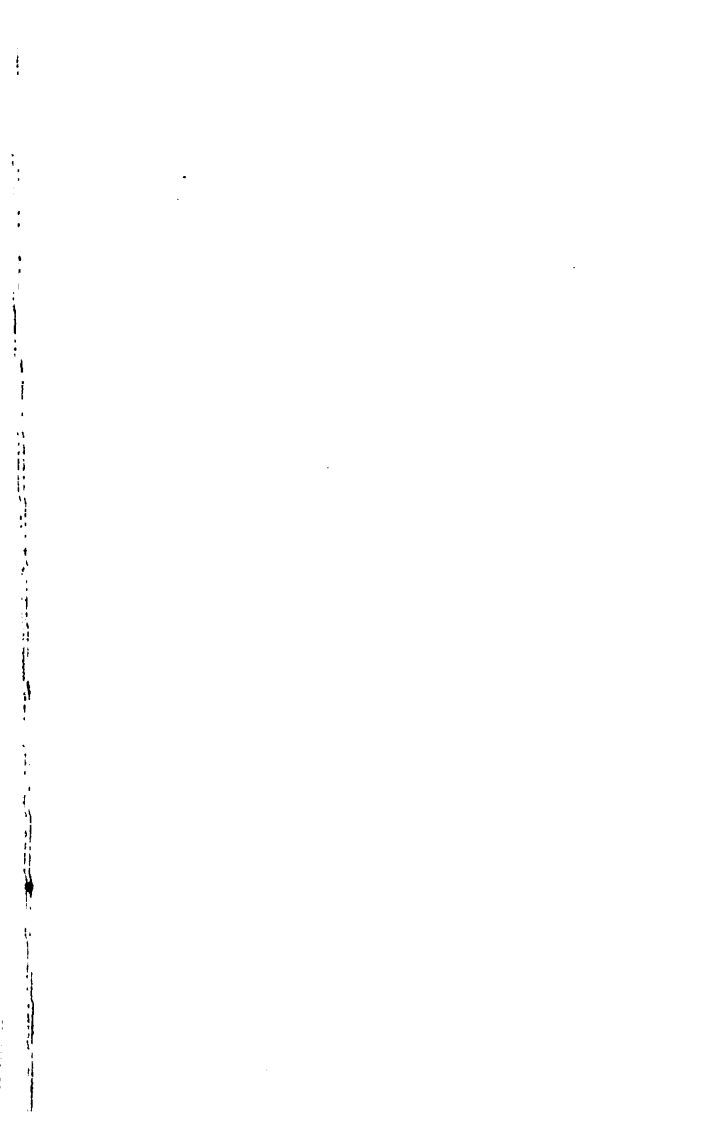


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RUTILIUS

AND

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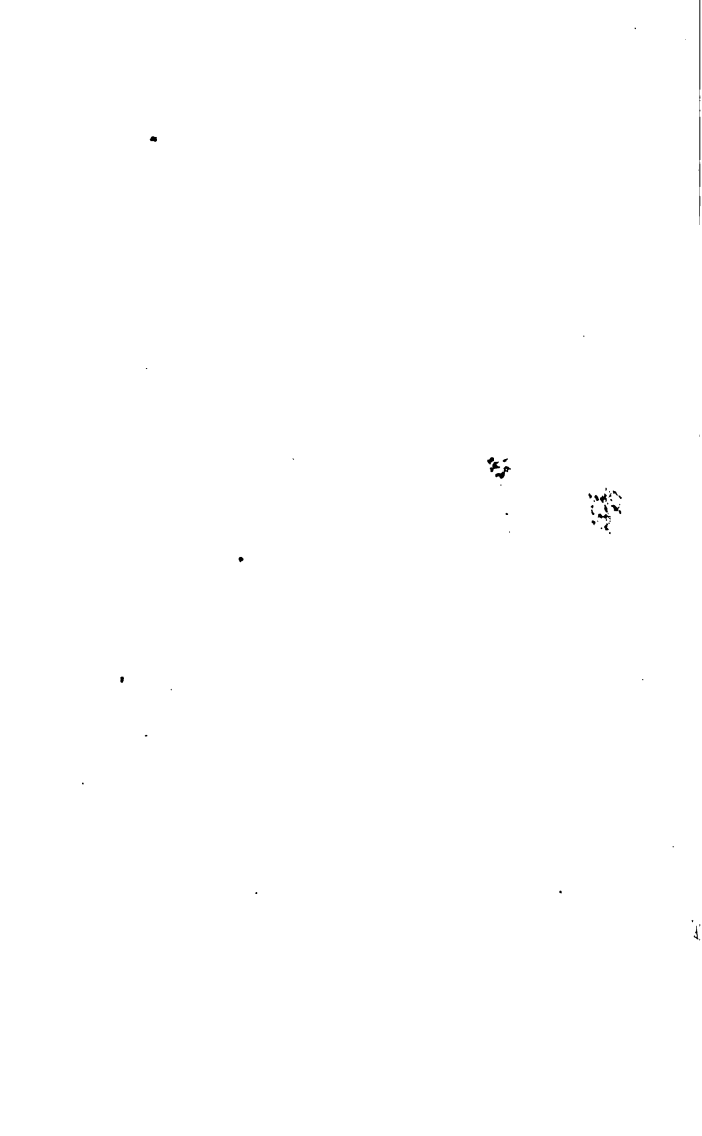
OR,

Stories of the Third Age.

LONDON

JAMES BURNS.

1842



RUTILIUS AND LUCIUS;

OR,

Stories of the Third Age.

BY

ROBERT ISAAC WILBERFORCE, M.A.

ARCHDEACON OF THE EAST RIDING, CANON OF YORK, &c.



LONDON:

JAMES BURNS, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

—
1842.

And thou, O fayrest princesse under sky,
In this fayre mirror maist behold thy face,
And thine owne realmes in lond of faery,
And in this antique ymage thy great auncestry.

The which, O pardon me thus to enfold
In covert vele and wrap in shadowes light,
That feeble eyes your glory may behold,
Which ells could not endure those beames bright,
But would be dazzled with exceeding light.

BYRON WARD
JULIAN
WARD

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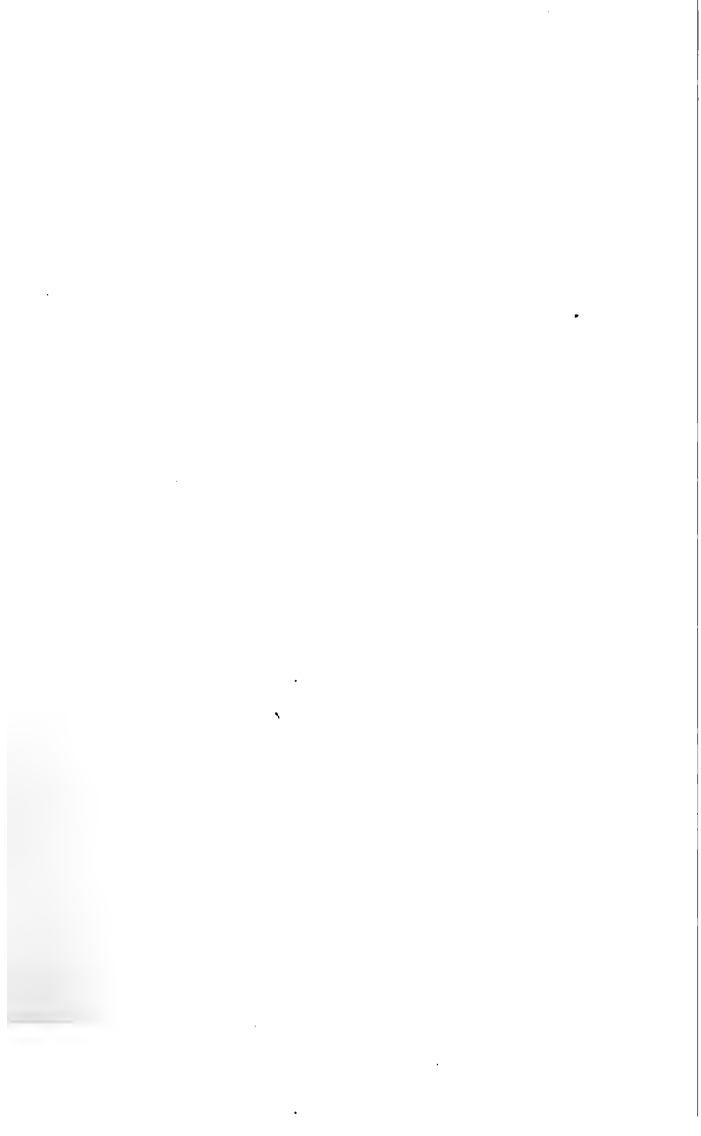
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RUTILIUS.

The time occupied by this story is from A.D. 297 to A.D. 298.

The scene opens in the mountains of Armenia.



CHAPTER I.

The Discovery.

Thus, under heavy arms, the youth of Rome
Their long laborious marches overcome,
Cheerly their tedious travels undergo,
And pitch their sudden camp before the foe.

DRYDEN'S *Virgil*.

THE day had been dark and stormy, and the lofty heights above the camp, which looked southward towards the plain of the Tigris, were still covered with clouds; but towards evening it promised better weather, and a party of Roman soldiers left their tents, either to enjoy the air, or perhaps to satisfy their curiosity respecting the position of the enemy. The leading figure among them was a man of middle height, whose step and manner bespoke long practice in the use of arms. He had not adopted any of those new customs which had crept into the Roman service even before the reign of the ruling emperor Dioclesian: his *pilum*, or spear, was of the ancient weight and solidity, and might have done its part at Zama or Pharsalia; his shield was thick and long; his cuirass and short cloak displayed thighs and legs muscular, as well as happily proportioned; and his face had that honest, hardy confidence which spoke

of past perils overcome, and of a mind ready to encounter the future. The veteran contrasted well with a youth who stood next to him. A handsome countenance, clustering hair escaping from under his helmet, armour of a lighter and more ornamental texture,—all looked as if he had been more accustomed to join the people of Antioch in their festive processions to the groves of Daphne, than to fight, like his companion, against the Germans on the Rhine, or the fierce Goths beyond the Danube. But though the capital of Syria was really his birth-place, yet his manly and intelligent countenance shewed no signs of that effeminacy which was but too usual among its citizens; while, on the other hand, the veteran, whom he watched with an easy and affectionate respect, had none of the ferocity of the wild Thracians with whom he had associated. In the group which surrounded Rutilius and his uncle Marcellus, for such was their relationship, might be seen specimens of those varying nations which swelled the armies of Rome. There was the swarthy African, of Punic descent, whose language, though professedly Latin, was mixed with words and idioms which betrayed his Phœnician origin. Next to him came a Celt, whose forefathers had fought under Caractacus. Beside him might be seen a soldier, from the neighbourhood of Nismes, whose family had formerly lived in Galatia (or Gallia Græca), but had returned to their original country since the widely spreading Roman empire had reunited these two

distant branches of the Gallic race. With these were mixed one or two natives of Armenia, who seemed to be pointing out the singular order and discipline of the Roman camp to a stranger, whose high cheek-bones and Tartarian cap, together with a wild and uncouth manner, a bow and arrows of strange make, and a dress singularly ornamented with silk, bespoke him the inhabitant of a country still more eastward.

After looking for a few moments upon a region well wooded and fertile, but apparently not thickly inhabited, over which the Roman encampment, occupying the slope of a mountainous declivity, commanded an extensive prospect, Marcellus addressed himself to one of the Armenians who was standing behind him. He had served before in that part of the world, and spoke the Armenian language with a readiness which surprised his colleagues.

"So you think the Persian army lies concealed among those woods?"

"So say our scouts," replied the Armenian, whose name was Viriathes; "and our friend here, who has intelligence among them, thinks it probable."

"We shall soon see, then, whether we are to fare better than in our last campaign, and whether the empire of the world is to belong to Cyrus or Cæsar."

"Our hopes go with you," said the Armenian: "our nation has suffered enough from those pagan

marauders. We hope to see the eagle of Rome and the cross of Christ victorious together."

The veteran surveyed him for a moment with a serious, and almost gloomy look. "Yes, you had told me that you also were a Christian: I would I too could expect that the success of our emperor would further the cause of the cross!"

"At all events," said Viriathes, "it is from the West that our nation must look for further knowledge of the Christian doctrines. Thence come our missionaries: from Antioch and Cæsarea they obtain the ordination which enables them to minister baptism and the awful communion; and from the same quarter come the holy prayers which they are now rendering into our native language."

"All this is true," replied the Roman; "but storms may arise from the same quarter which gives sunshine."

"And why should you expect it?"

"From what I see of our Cæsar Galerius. I have known him long; for I served in Germany under Maximian when he was first raised to his office. He is not, Viriathes, like your king Tiridates, the offspring of an ancient line: both he and Maximian were children of Thracian peasants; and he was himself but a herdsman when he entered our ranks. His mother, the slave of idolatrous superstition, has infected her son's mind with a hatred against whatever is Christian; and when any success shall give him opportunity, I fear that he will renew the perse-

cutions which in former times were directed against us."

"But has not Dioclesian been always distinguished for wisdom, as well as kindness?"

"He has; and I cannot believe that he would willingly disturb the peace of the empire, or stain his hands with innocent blood. And yet, even from him we have our fears. Have you heard the violent anger which he lately expressed at the interruption of his idolatrous sacrifices?"

His companion replied in the negative.

"You know the custom of our ancestors to judge of the probable success of their enterprises by the entrails of the animals which they kill in sacrifice?"

"This," said the Armenian, "is but one of the means by which the worshippers of false gods profess to determine the future,—expecting to learn what passes humanity from the brute creatures who fall below it."

"There is more in the thing than you seem to allow," answered the Roman: "our fathers did not look to the brutes for instruction, but supposed them to be instruments in the hands of beings who are more powerful than mankind."

"What beings?" said his companion.

"Our apostle teaches us that the sacrifices of our fathers were offered to evil spirits; and when I look at the signal success which attended their arms, I think it likely that God may have allowed them to receive both help and guidance from such sources.

At all events, I cannot tell what has so strangely changed the oracles, once so famous in Greece, unless it be that God's Church is holy ground, into which these evil spirits dare not venture. And this our emperor seems to have found."

"But who ventured to interrupt him?" said the Armenian.

"No one made any direct opposition; but as he was sacrificing¹ lately in front of that magnificent palace which he has built at Nicomedia, with all his court about him, some of his domestic officers were seen to make the mark of a cross upon their foreheads. They wished, I suppose, to remind themselves of the sign which was given them in baptism, and which bound them to have no share in such impieties. One of the augurs saw what they did; and whether he wished to conceal some mistake he had made, or that a real effect followed, he cried out directly, that the sacrifice must end, for that the gods would not give an answer in the presence of these Christians. Valerian is said to have commenced his persecution against us in consequence of a complaint which, in like manner, was made against us by the Egyptian priests."²

The Armenian's reply was interrupted by the hasty arrival of a few horsemen. The rank of their leader was more evident from the respect with which

¹ This circumstance is mentioned by Lactantius de Morte Persecutorum.

² Eusebius, vii. 10.

the whole party received him, than from his arms or dress. He wore the light greaves and cuirass, and carried the long lance of a common trooper ; but his horse, which he managed with much skill, without seeming to be burdened with the small round buckler of the Roman cavalry, was one of the best which was supplied from the studs of Cappadocia.

" Marcellus," he said, with a commanding tone, " have you the men whom I ordered in readiness ?"

" Most noble Cæsar," said the centurion, " they are ready to mount at a moment's warning."

" And these are the Armenians, with their strange companion ?"

Then, turning to Viriathes, the Cæsar Galerius said, " This, then, is the Scythian, of whom your king has informed me. What does he report respecting the Persian host ?"

" His tidings," said the Armenian, " are certain and important. He says that they have advanced into the level country, from which we are now removed but about ten miles ; and that they are so little acquainted with the passes of these hills, that they are utterly ignorant of our approach."

Galerius paused for a moment, and then turning to Marcellus, " How can we be sure that this is not another Persian stratagem ? I have no mind to kneel down, like our predecessor Valerian, when Narses mounts on horseback, that my back may serve for his stepping-stone."

" King Tiridates offers to vouch for the fidelity

of Mamgo, and says that he has already committed his family and flocks to his care."

"That is something," said Galerius; "I would warrant your Scythian careful about his herd, whatever he may be as to his family."

The centurion said no more: he may have felt that he was touching on delicate ground; for that no one should know more about the care of cattle than Galerius himself, who had been brought up a common herdsman.

The Armenian profited by his silence: "The opportunity which we have to-night," he said, "may never return. The Persian army seldom encamps so near the highlands, for fear of a sudden surprise; and they would not have approached them at present, were they not utterly ignorant of our march. Your army has not been heard of since you passed the Tigris, and entered this mountainous district; and they suppose you to be full three hundred miles to the westward. At all events, let me advise that a party be sent to observe the position of the Persians, and to report whether Mamgo's information be not correct."

"I will do more," said Galerius; "I will go myself. Marcellus, let your men mount immediately. I see I remember the faces of most of them: that swarthy African fought with us against the Bagaudæ, in Gaul; and so, I think, did his companion: but who is this fair-haired youth, who stands beside you?"

"This, noble Cæsar, is my nephew, Rutilius: he comes of a martial family; and if he is young, yet I will vouch him to be as ready to serve as I was when I gained my first promotion in our sally from Treves the day Herculus was made consul."

"Ah, I have heard that was as sharp a storm as it was a sudden one."

"True, noble prince. The Emperor Maximian was just seated in his curule chair of office, and had been saluted by his new name of Hercules, when the Germans might be seen defiling along the adjoining heights. He leapt from his chair—he was on horse-back in a few minutes—by mid-day the barbarians were completely routed; and before sunset he was again in his chair of state, receiving the thanks of the citizens."

"Those Gallic peasants, the Bagaudæ, stood some sharper brushes than that. But they say that the two leaders who gave us so much trouble were Christians; so it is likely they were well trained in rebellion."

The centurion would evidently have dropped the conversation; but as Galerius looked to him for a reply, he answered boldly, "That they were Christians I never heard; had they been so, they would surely have imitated the quietness and loyalty of their brethren."

Galerius gave an angry glance: "What! are you one of them? This is new to me. How can you do your duty to your emperor?"

“Did I ever fail of it?” said the centurion.

“How can you worship the eagles which our ancestors called the soldier’s gods? Think well: you have already a service. Why, but last year we had to behead a youth, who was brought to enlist by his own father, because he said he was Christ’s soldier, and would not take service under any earthly king.”

The colour mounted to the centurion’s brow at the last remark, which evidently affected him deeply; and his nephew seemed to share his confusion. He had begun to reply, “That youth, however noble, was not acting on the principles of the Christians,”—when he was cut short by the arrival of his men, who had been despatched for the horses. In a few minutes the whole party issued through the principal gate of the embankment which surrounded the Roman station. They had been standing in the space which intervened on every side between it and the tents of the soldiery. The Scythian led the way, mounted on a short but active horse, which he managed with wonderful address. Then came the Armenians and Marcellus, while the other soldiers rode behind or on each side Galerius. But they were soon obliged to form in column; for after riding for a mile or two over open country, they entered the precipitous ravines which led into the plains. Never was magnificent scenery lost upon less observant spectators. The sun was just sinking below the horizon, while a broad red light glowed upon the lofty mountains towards the north-east, which rose immediately

behind them. Before them lay a series of craggy promontories, ascending to a great height, and clothed on the sides with thick wood, which, broken by the occasional projection of gigantic rocks, gathered at the bottom into an impenetrable mass of shade. Now and then an occasional opening would give a passing glimpse into the region beyond, and a level champaign of vast extent was seen to stretch away in the uncertain light of evening; just as the monotonous labours of middle life are dimly contemplated by the ardent youth, before he can persuade himself to bid a last adieu to the fanciful day-dreams of his childhood. So thought the young Rutilius, as he looked upon the scene of which his companions were so regardless. His youth had been passed at Athens, where natural talents for literature, and a love of whatever was sublime in nature or art, had been matured by the study of the philosophy of Plato. But his model for active life had been the other favourite disciple of Socrates, whose celebrated march through these very regions had rendered him the more impatient to follow his uncle's career in the armies of the emperor. That such should be his course, had long been promised by his father; and though now an only child,—another brother having been lately lost to the family under circumstances of peculiar distress,—he was committed to his uncle's care, from whose high character, and supposed favour with the emperor, he had been accustomed to anticipate advancement. And this uncle, whose necessary ab-

sence he had often heard regretted in his father's household, whom but two days ago he had seen for the first time, and found every thing which his warmest wishes could desire, he had now heard acknowledge himself to be—what the world in general treated with so much contempt, and what among his own kindred was regarded with peculiar abhorrence—a Christian.

CHAPTER II.

*The Battle.*¹

Unharnessed chariots stand along the shore ;
Amidst the wheels and reins, the goblet by,
A medley of debauch and war they lie.

DRYDEN'S *Virgil*.

THE reflections of Rutilius were interrupted by the difficulty of the path, which soon became so precipitous as to require his utmost attention. A mountain-torrent found its passage through the rocky and wooded bed of the valley; and by its side, and along its bottom, the Scythian horseman pursued his course without hesitation. Accustomed from his youth to the management of horses, the young Roman could not suppress his astonishment at the perfect unity which seemed to exist between this native of the desert and the animal which carried him. And then the singular features of their guide — his small eyes sunk in his head, his short and ill-shaped legs, his powerful arms and shoulders, seemed altogether to

¹ The events which follow are recorded by the ordinary historians of the period, Ammianus Marcellinus and Eutropius; while additional circumstances are supplied by Lactantius *De Morte Persecutorum*, and by the historian of Armenia, Moses of Chorene.

point him out as a fit original for the fable of the centaurs which had amused his infancy. Such observations could only be made when they issued occasionally into a glade where the upper foliage ceased to be continuous, and could catch a glimpse of the moon, which was now riding high in the heavens. It was near midnight before the Scythian stopped, and addressed a few words to Viriathes in the Armenian language. A general halt followed; and Galerius, attended by two of his men, ascended a slight eminence, from which, by the failing light of the moon, he could overlook the Persian encampment. The army of Narses stretched over a vast extent of country; and the total want of order, the merriment and festivity which still continued in several quarters, the horses tethered by chains to prevent their escape, while their riders lay slumbering in tents at a distance,—all shewed how fatal to them would be a sudden attack.

After they had watched the prospect for a time, the Scythian made a signal in what seemed to Rutilius to be a harsh and almost unearthly language, which was instantly responded to by a small party of his countrymen who hastened from the camp. They conversed for a few minutes in front of the trees by which the Romans were concealed; and then Mamgo returned to communicate the result to the Armenian.

“They remain here,” said Viriathes, “for some days, waiting reinforcements; they have neither sentinels nor ramparts; and as they are obliged to tether

their horses to stakes in order to secure them, they can neither escape nor oppose a sudden attack."

"Here, then," said Galerius, "we may repay them the disasters which we suffered last year on that open plain in Mesopotamia. These ridges answer our purpose as well as that sandy level did theirs. Narses may walk himself in our triumph; or we may exchange him for that stuffed skin of the unhappy Valerian, which they say that the Persians have kept to this day." Thus muttered the Cæsar to himself, as, with a smothered access of passion at the thought of his previous disgrace, he began slowly to retrace his steps; after sending on one of the Armenians to give notice that the army should be ready to march early in the following day. Viriathes, who remained, rode at some distance behind him with Marcellus.

"Your Cæsar seems provoked at the thought of his last year's defeat," said the former in his own language.

"You would not wonder at his anger," replied the Roman, "if you had witnessed what I saw when we met Dioclesian at Antioch after our escape. Galerius had put on his robe of purple, and expected to have been received as usual by his father-in-law. But Dioclesian reproached him for having exposed the Romans to certain defeat, by following Crassus instead of Trajan, and thus entangling himself among the sandy plains near the Euphrates. No chariot had been provided for him; and as Dioclesian would not receive him into his, he had to walk after it a

full mile into the city. Your king Tiridates has some cause to remember that day. How did he escape; for he seemed almost deserted when I lost sight of him?"

"His escape," said Viriathes, "was wonderful. If Galerius had to walk a mile, he had to swim good part of one. He was cut off by the Persian cavalry from the small body of Romans who escaped, and had to fly towards the eastward. An hour's riding brought him to the Euphrates. The Persians were just behind, and his horse was wounded. He had just time to plunge into the stream; and, what none of his subjects but himself could have done, for you know his great strength, he swam across it."

The conversation was now broken off by the difficulties of the ground, which continued till within a short distance of the Roman camp. The passage of an army through such defiles was so difficult, that the Roman troops were ordered to be on their march before morn on the following day. By a late hour in the evening they were mustered in a small plain, about three miles from the enemy, when the watchword was given, and the different leaders received their last instructions. Marcellus headed a party which was to break into the Persian line at the very point to which the Scythian had conducted him on the preceding evening. While waiting the summons to advance, he called aside his nephew, from whom he had been separated during the hurry of the day.

"The course of our attack," he said, "leads

directly to some tents, which, as I learn from the Scythian, are occupied by the wives and children of the great king."

"What!" said Rutilius, "do the Orientals bring their women and children to look at the grisly face of war?"

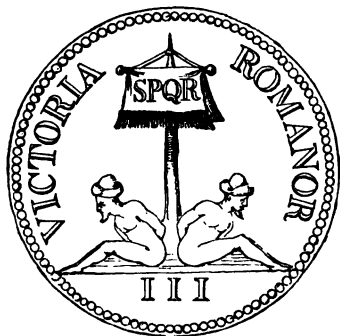
"Such is their habit," replied his uncle; "in which I have a further reason than you think for being interested. In the Persian inroad which followed our defeat last year, many Romans were carried into a distant captivity, and among them a noble maiden, with whose fate is bound up my own happiness. For her sake it was that I volunteered to join this expedition, from which my services might have given me an exemption; and the report of the Scythian leads me to suspect that she is now in attendance on the wife of Narses. And now, young man, observe my words. In this attack all will be bent on plunder; for I expect that no effectual resistance will be made by the Persian army. Let me have your aid, therefore, in my attempt to penetrate directly to the tents of these Persian women, and to secure all whom it contains."

Rutilius readily promised his assistance, though he would gladly have known something more respecting the object of his uncle's solicitude, and was surprised at learning the existence of feelings of which he supposed the rugged soldier to be destitute. He received from Marcellus all the information which Mamgo had supplied respecting the situa-

tion and distinguishing marks of the tents towards which their efforts were to be directed, and which Marcellus had fancied that he could dimly descry on the preceding evening. The description was no sooner given than they received the signal to advance: in perfect silence, unbroken save by the occasional ringing of some legionary's sword as he stumbled against a projecting rock or tree, the Romans moved on in several columns. On their way they were joined by the small body of Scythians, who, on a signal from Mamgo, left the Persian lines. The column which Marcellus commanded was the first to appear upon the plain, and, after forming into line, to draw their swords and to clash with them upon their bucklers, as they rushed against the nearest portion of the enemy's encampment. The confusion which followed was what Xenophon has described as the result of a night-attack upon an Eastern army. The Persians hurried forth from their tents to caparison their horses, which were tethered at considerable intervals; and some time was lost in removing the shackles with which they were commonly secured. Before their work was completed, the assailants were at hand; and fortunate were those who could escape on foot. A small force in the immediate neighbourhood of the king's person was better prepared. A few elephants had been kept ready for instant service, and about two hundred men were drawn up in front of the royal tent. This delay saved the person of Narses from the attack of Marcellus and his

nephew. A few of their men held together ; though many had already quitted the line during its advance, to seek plunder in the tents which they had overthrown. For a few minutes there was a hot struggle, in which Marcellus shewed the daring and coolness which had been well tried in the wars of the West. When the elephants were driven against his line, he called to his men to open and allow their passage, and then rushing forward, he slew, with his own hand, the leader of the royal body-guards. Rutilius seconded him bravely ; and in a few moments their opponents were flying like the rest of the army,—though not till several persons had issued from the royal tent, and mounted upon horses which stood in readiness ; one elephant also passed with a rapid and unwieldy pace in the same direction, and Rutilius fancied that he could descry some female figures in the tower upon its back. A moment, however, and all had disappeared in the darkness. The royal tent was fairly surrounded ; but when it was on the point of being pillaged by the soldiery, Marcellus raised his voice, and with a commanding tone ordered his men to forbear. “ This tent,” he said, “ must be kept till the Cæsar has declared his pleasure ; seek elsewhere your booty.” The order was readily obeyed ; for spoils of incredible wealth were scattered on every side : every where might be seen common soldiers leading off the war-horses of the Persian nobility, loaded with sumptuous trappings. One man had met with a bag of pearls, which he was

pouring out, from ignorance of their value, that he might carry away the leather which contained them with more convenience. No one but had furnished himself with some valuable ; Marcellus only and his nephew were anxiously guarding the royal tent, which they had their own reason for preferring to any other prize. When they had collected men enough to secure all its outlets, they proceeded to learn whom it contained. Their prisoners, they soon found, were of great value, being no less than the wives and children of the Persian king ; but the countenance of Marcellus fell, when, after a most diligent search, he was compelled to abandon the hope that the ample precincts of the royal tent contained the captive maiden whom he was so desirous to rescue.



Memorial of Roman victory in the East
From a coin of Julian.



Flying Parthian. From the Arch of Severus.

CHAPTER III.

The Expedition.

The shepherd last appears,
And with him all his patrimony bears;
His house and household-gods, his trade of war,
His bow and quiver, and his trusty cur.

DRYDEN'S *Virgil*.

THE second day after the battle found the victorious army in motion towards the town of Nisibis, the strongest post which the Romans possessed in Mesopotamia, where Galerius expected to be joined by Dioclesian himself with the reserve. The object of the campaign was already answered. The Persians had fled across plains where it was impossible to pursue them; but in the wives and children of Narses, the Romans had the best hostages for his

submission. At Nisibis, therefore, a peace was concluded,—the Persian monarch renouncing all claim to that wide region which extended northward of the Tigris, between the Caspian Sea and the ridges of Caucasus. A large part of this country was added to the dominions of Tiridates. Nor were the inferior agents of Rome forgotten. Mamgo, with his Scythians, was allowed, by Tiridates, to occupy a fertile plain near the Araxes; and Marcellus, to whose rapidity and forbearance was attributed the capture and preservation of the family of Narses, was advanced to a station of greater trust by the emperor.

As soon as a treaty was made, the army moved westward; but, to the surprise of his comrades, Marcellus solicited and received an appointment in the neighbourhood of Nisibis; and, at his desire, his nephew remained with him. Rutilius was not as yet enrolled as a regular soldier, his uncle having hitherto retained him as a sort of attendant upon himself; and to this arrangement the young man the more readily consented, because it would leave him at greater liberty, if, as he suspected, there was still some scheme in agitation for the deliverance of the captive, of whom he fancied he had caught a distant glimpse through the darkness of the night of battle. Though the dejection under which his uncle evidently suffered prevented him from making any direct inquiries, yet a few hints which had been dropped induced him to put this interpretation on the frequent visits of Viriathes, who had attended

the king of Armenia to Nisibis. But he was soon to receive clearer information. About a month after the departure of the Roman army, the governor of Nisibis sent for Marcellus, and desired him to undertake a service of great importance, which required his presence in Egypt. The veteran would gladly have declined, but the governor would take no excuse; and as the party which was sent had to cross directly through the desert which intervenes between Mesopotamia and Palestine, it required a soldier of experience for its command. Though purposing to return as speedily as possible, Marcellus now thought it necessary to impart the subject of his anxiety to his nephew. Viriathes had ascertained, from some followers of the Persian army, that Flavia—such was the name of the lady he sought—had not returned into Persia after the battle, but that she had been carried away by one of those independent chieftains who followed the standard of Narses; but no tidings could yet be gained of the place of her captivity. Yet Viriathes had not given up his search; and if any news arrived from him before the return of Marcellus, his nephew was to make immediate application for assistance to the governor of Nisibis.

Nothing occurred for some time after the departure of Marcellus. But at length Rutilius was surprised by the sudden arrival of Viriathes himself. He had heard that Flavia was the captive of a Curdish chieftain, whose tribe was in the habit of ranging to the south and south-east of the Caspian, and who

commanded some strong places towards the Caucasus, which the late changes had attached nominally to the authority of Rome. In that wild region, Viriathes stated that there were various independent leaders, who held fortresses among the rocks, from which, should they be driven, they would probably retire either into the depths of Caucasus, or into the Scythian desert. As yet the capturer of Flavia had left her, with his other booty, in one of his strongest mountain-fortresses, while he had himself gone, as was thought, to meet some distant members of his tribe; and it was of the utmost moment to rescue her before he could retire to some more distant region, where to follow was impossible. This news had reached Viriathes at Tigranocerta, where he was in attendance on Tiridates; and he had hastened to Nisibis to inform his friend.

The resolution of Rutilius was instantly taken. It suited well with the ardour of his youthful enthusiasm to traverse those wild mountains, of which he had seen the outskirts while with the army of Galerius, and to attempt the deliverance of this captive maiden. Already did he in fancy bring her back from her lonely captivity, and anticipate his uncle's delight when he should return to meet his betrothed bride. Having obtained a sum of money in his uncle's name, and secured the services of a few well-mounted men, he set out with Viriathes on the following morning. Their route lay at first along the level plain of Mesopotamia, where travelling was rendered safe by the

authority of Rome. They soon reached the Tigris, which was swelled by the melting of the snows on the lofty ridge which forms the southern barrier of Armenia. Happily, however, there were vessels to be procured. The difficulty of crossing this rapid stream recalled the thoughts of Rutilius to the interesting narrative of Xenophon; for the hilly country into which he was now about to enter was the same through which the ten thousand Greeks had been compelled to retreat, in order to avoid the deep rivers of Mesopotamia. The party soon began to ascend along a precipitous mountain-path, which, following the direction of the water-courses, led into the heart of the mountains. The Roman now felt how much he was indebted to the assistance of his Armenian guide. At times their way was along narrow defiles, where the mountains seemed every moment about to close before them, and to forbid any further access into the secrets of their wild grandeur. A sudden turn would unexpectedly give a passage into a green and fertile valley, teeming with all the luxuriance of natural beauty; just as a miser will sometimes be prodigal of his gifts, when he has been induced in some single instance to forego his wonted parsimony. At such times Viriathes would send forward one or two of his countrymen,—for a small party had joined him at the entrance of the mountains,—to ascertain whether any danger was to be expected from the rude inhabitants. At night he carried the Roman to villages which preserved the same simple form which had been described by

Xenophon. "The houses were underground; the mouth like a well: a wider space within. There was a paved entrance for the descent of cattle; the men went down by ladders. Within there were sheep, goats, cattle, and birds." They had now reached the highest level of the mountains, and after a time began to descend towards the plains to the north-west. And now Viriathes, whose conversation had hitherto been of a general kind, began to enter more particularly into the difficulties which lay before them. He had gained more certain information from the party which had met him on his route. He was assured that Flavia was in a castle adjoining the great lake of Arsissa, or Van, as it has since been called; and that the fortress was held by a large body of Scythian soldiers, who were masters of the city of Artemita, or Van, which lay beneath it. With a view to obtain entrance into the castle, Viriathes proposed to seek the assistance of Mamgo, whose wild tribe was settled in the neighbourhood. On this account he had crossed the hills at some distance from the line which he would otherwise have adopted, and he now descended considerably to the westward of the lake of Arsissa.

"You crossed the Tigris four days back," he told Rutilius; "you imagine that the Euphrates is far behind you; but towards evening you will cross a branch of it again."

"How shall we get over?" asked the Roman. "The Tigris was so flooded, that but for the aid of vessels we should have been unable to pass; and

since these two rivers are said to rise in the same range of mountains, their streams are no doubt highest at the same period."

"The floods of the Euphrates," said the Armenian, "are not yet begun. Its waters run from the northern side of the mountains, whose southern face is drained by the Tigris; and it is ever a week or two later before the melting snows increase the northern stream."

So the travellers found it. They passed easily over a large branch of the Euphrates which ran in a north-west direction, and speedily approached the tent of Mamgo.

While they were approaching the Scythian encampment, Rutilius put some questions to his companion respecting its chief. "You are right," replied Viriathes, "in supposing that Mamgo is unlike any of the wandering Scythians of this land.¹ He comes from a country which lies eight months' journey to the eastward. The whole of the immense tract which lies between is uncultivated, and uninhabited except by wandering shepherds like himself. But if his accounts can be believed, a kingdom of greater wealth, if not of greater power, than even your famous empire lies beyond. Indeed, we have proof of its riches; for the silk which you so highly value is known to be common enough among these inhabitants of Seres. Mamgo has often told me, as a

¹ The history of Mamgo is given by Moses of Chorene, *Hist. Armen.* ii. § 81.

mark of their industry, that they have raised a wall of prodigious height and thickness, which runs for some hundred miles along their frontiers, to guard them from the incursions of his countrymen. However, they can be in no fear of them at present ; for he himself is a fugitive, in consequence of the anger of the king of Seres, and his countrymen have either been subdued, or have fled to the northward, into those trackless deserts which extend to the western bounds of your empire on the Danube and the Rhine."

The curiosity of Rutilius was excited ; and he learned, by further inquiry, that Mamgo had fled for refuge to the king of Persia ; and when the Chinese emperor had demanded his surrender, had been allowed to occupy his present quarters ; the king of Persia saying that he had inflicted a heavier punishment than death, by banishing him into the utmost West. Mamgo's own discontent with his place of settlement had led him to espouse the party of the Romans. Viriathes said something further, on the possibility that these Huns—for so this nation of Scythians was called—might one day become dangerous to the civilised world ; when their conversation was stopped by their arrival at a rude encampment.

Rutilius knew by description what was the mode of life among the barbarous Germans ; but now he saw the savage state in a different form. A single glance shewed him that, instead of the fastnesses among woods and marshes, to which the Germans trusted for defence,—the Scythians, whom he was

visiting, had no dwellings which the labour of a few minutes would not enable them to remove. The Germans fought on foot, and trusted for success to their desperate valour; but the vast number of animals which he saw about the encampment shewed that the Huns were an equestrian and a pastoral people. The Roman armies had often retired before the swords of the naked Germans; but here he saw weapons of another kind—bows of prodigious length and size, and arrows so large, that, like those which the companions of Xenophon had taken from the Carduchians of the adjoining mountains, they might be used as javelins. Such weapons were leaning on every side against the row of small circular tents which surrounded the encampment. These tents were occupied by Mamgo's followers: in the middle stood the somewhat larger dwelling of the chief himself. It was a wooden shed, of the rudest workmanship, raised about three feet from the ground, and supported on six wheels, which had perhaps transported it over half the circumference of the earth. In front of it was the Scythian, seated at his evening repast. The day seemed one of festivity; for in place of their usual diet, the milk of mares, several of his tribe were sharing with him in a meal on horse-flesh. While Mamgo arose to welcome Viriathes, the Roman had time to remark the extreme deformity of the Scythian countenance. In Mamgo himself it was sufficiently apparent; but when Rutilius saw that the harsh and projecting bones of

the cheek, the low forehead, the short nose, the small eyes, the mis-shaped though powerful legs and body, were not peculiar to the chieftain, but were the characteristic of his race,—he could understand the popular legend, afterwards so prevalent in the empire, that the Huns were descended from demon fathers, and that their mothers were the witches of the Scythian desert.

He saw his hosts under more favourable circumstances the next morning, when, accompanied by a body of thirty Huns, Viriathes and himself moved forward on their enterprise. He could not deny them the praise of being the best horsemen he had ever beheld : it seemed as if all the functions of life—to eat, drink, and even to sleep—were as easy to them when mounted on their small but active horses, as when stretched beside them on the plains. The deformity of their lower limbs might be clearly traced to the constant habit of riding, among a people to whom the use of stirrups was unknown, and it contributed to give them a firmer seat upon the animal. He expressed his admiration to Viriathes ; adding, however, that from their rudeness and ignorance, he saw no reason for the apprehension which the Armenian had expressed for the safety of the civilised world.

“ True,” replied Viriathes ; “ but you are not perhaps aware of that which has been declared to us Christians in our sacred Scriptures—though, indeed, I am told that such anticipations may be ga-

thered from some of those heathen predictions which have been preserved among you. This vast empire of Rome, which has stood for so many centuries, and which you Romans fondly call eternal,—we know that it is to be speedily destroyed, and that some great change is to befall the whole aspect of the world.”

“I have no great faith,” replied the Roman, “in such predictions: we have many of the kind you say in our Sibylline books; but did you ever know an instance in which they served to guard men against a coming danger?”

“Did you never hear how the Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem were preserved when the Emperor Titus destroyed the city? his coming had been predicted forty years before, and some circumstances described which attended it. When the Roman eagles first appeared before the city, the Christians consulted some principal teachers who were at that time alive; and, by their advice, departed in a body a few days before the blockade commenced. They continued at Pella after the destruction of the city; and it was a curious consequence of their origin, that in this place there long existed a body of persons who were greatly censured by the other Christians for adhering to their Jewish customs.”

Rutilius was struck by the instance his companion had adduced; but he merely replied, “Supposing you have such a prediction, why should you expect any danger from these wandering Scythians?”

“Because this seems the part of the world

from which alone could come such a host as to be dangerous. The northern parts of Europe have been explored—they are inhabited by many wild nations; but you have often overcome them. The Persians you have lately conquered; and they are not inclined to leave Asia for such distant regions. Africa is inhabited but by few and unwarlike nations. But this boundless expanse of Scythia might supply men enough to overrun all the rest of the world. Their custom is to roam from place to place; they are at home wherever their horses and cattle can find pasture; they have weapons which even your legions cannot resist; and what I hear from Mamgo of their present movements makes me think it not unlikely that they may sweep like a wave over the whole West. I learn from him, that, in consequence of the conquests of that great empire of Serica" (China), "of which I spoke to you, his countrymen have begun to move towards the north-west. The whole of Scythia is in motion. Meantime your armies are becoming every day more effeminate; your soldiers have laid aside their defensive arms; and, if I rightly understand our prophecies, they have exactly prepared themselves for the destruction by which they may at any moment be overwhelmed. God grant it may be distant! I have too many friends among you to desire to behold such fearful events, even though our doctors tell us that they are a step towards the complete establishment of the Christian name."

Rutilius could not deny that the Armenian was right in supposing Roman discipline to have degenerated, however visionary he might think his fears of the approach of the Huns. But his attention was now drawn off by the prospect of the Arsissa Palus, a lake of surpassing beauty, embosomed in lofty mountains, which was just opening to their view. "On the further side of that lake," said Viriathes, "lies the object of our search. Two of us, with as many Huns, must enter secretly into the city of Artemita, leaving the rest of our followers in the adjoining plain to await the result of our attempt, at a place where we shall appoint them. Mamgo reports, that to storm the castle where Flavia is confined would be impossible ; but he thinks it possible that stratagem may be more successful." Rutilius resolved to enter Artemita himself, in company with Viriathes, who would not be left behind ; and they arranged their measures while skirting along the sides of the mountains which descended toward the lake. At length a turn in their course shewed them towers on the top of a lofty rock. At this point they parted from all their companions, except two of Mamgo's people, who were well known to the Scythian masters of Artemita ; and in the disguise of Jewish merchants, which Viriathes had procured, understanding that there were many of that nation in the town, they entered the place at a late hour in the evening.

CHAPTER IV.

The Captive.

What soul soe'er in any language can
Speak heav'n like her's is my soul's countryman.

CRASHAW.

WHILE the travellers had been surveying the rocky castle of Artemita from a distance, its interior had been the scene of unusual bustle. A large body of Scythians had returned from a distant expedition; their weary horses might be seen foddered in every direction about the town; while they had themselves collected within the courts of the fortress. They seemed to be looking out for some one; and when at length they ceased to expect his arrival, they gathered round various fires, where they spent a large part of the night in noisy carousals. Their loud mirth was a singular contrast to the still and even melancholy grandeur of a vast pile of building which formed one side of the court; and which, lighted up at times by the flickering of their fires, shewed worn and channelled walls which had stood for centuries; while so soon as the fires decayed, it loomed forth a black and undistinguishable mass against the sky. This building was continued on the other side to the very verge of a precipice of prodigious height, which

overhung the town; westward lay the lake, too distant to be seen in the darkness, yet likely to become visible soon after midnight, when the rising moon would probably shed a silver light on the summit of the snowy heights beyond, and reveal something of the exceeding beauty of the valley which lay beneath them. So, perhaps, thought two females, who might be seen at times looking down upon the rude forms of the Scythians, when the glancing of the fires shed an occasional light upon them, and then turning towards another window of the same apartment, which, being above the sheer descent of the precipice, looked forth at present into nothing but the fearfulness of a black abyss. One of them had the countenance and manner of the West; the other was obviously of Scythian origin. They talked as friends; but the Scythian maiden had that sort of respect for her companion which might be supposed to arise from the consciousness of inferior knowledge and civilisation. "Our chieftain will not come to-night," she said, after looking for some time through the latticed window; "so that to-night, at all events, you need not fear. Yet why should you be so unwilling to wed the bravest warrior on the plains of Scythia? Which of the daughters of our tribe would not think it an honour?"

"Kind maiden," replied Flavia, for she was the person addressed, "I long for my own land, and for those of my own faith. Have I not told you that I worship the Christian's God, of which your tribe

knows nothing? And for your wild life, were it not that my faith in God forbids, I would rather throw myself down yon viewless precipice than share it."

"Say not so," said her companion; "do you not know that my cousin has told the Armenians where you are, and that your countrymen will surely seek to ransom you?"

"Alas! what hope of it, since to-morrow is to carry me into distant slavery, where the very name of a Roman is unknown?" So saying, Flavia threw herself down in an agony of grief; and her companion had enough of natural feeling not to break in upon sorrow which it was impossible to alleviate. She left the room; and meeting some of her countrymen, learnt that their chief would probably arrive in the morning, and take immediate steps for their departure. Flavia was thus left to the solitude which she better liked than any thing else which her captivity allowed; and when she had at length recovered her self-command, she seated herself at a window furthest removed from the revelry of the Scythians, and sat waiting with calm dejection for the rising of the moon. "So this," she said to herself, "is the last night that I shall enjoy this prospect, which, even in my captivity, I have learnt to love. Yet why does my faith so totally fail me? Why may not the God whom I have implored deliver me even yet from my oppressors? I know that the lake lies below me, and the verdant valley before it, though the moon has not yet risen to discover its beauty.

God's providence may in like manner be working for my good ; though as yet His gracious purposes are hidden under a veil of equal darkness."

The thought seemed to give her comfort, and to enable her to have recourse to what had been her ordinary occupation at this solitary hour. Undisturbed, unregarded, did this Christian maiden lift up her voice to God in this distant land ; and no less comfort did she experience than the prophet-courtier when he supplicated for his people beside the streams of Assyria. At length the moon ascended, and discovered the full beauty of the scene before her. To calm her feelings, she began to sing in a low voice some verses which she had either composed, or which the scene suggested to her.

Soft on my ear the distant waters roll,
As pity's accents on a wounded soul ;
While here by eve's serenest light I scan
This scene too lovely for offending man.
Say, was it lovelier then that garden-ground
Of Eden's rivers four encompassed round ;
Say, were its groves more green, its skies more bright,
That primal dwelling of divine delight ?
Oh, might the beautiful of earth recall
What once our fathers lost by Adam's fall ;
Might but to-morrow's sacred hours display
That innocence to heaven which fled away ;
Calmed by its power, our troubled hearts should sleep,
As in the moon's pale beam yon trembling deep.
So were some portion ours of heavenly bliss,
Nor needed fairer Paradise than this.

Flavia had scarcely ceased, when she fancied that,

from the very heart of the rock beneath her feet, a hollow voice uttered her own name. She started at the strangeness of the summons: a moment before, and she had thought that the wretchedness of her condition could not be increased; but now her solitary situation, and the stories prevalent respecting that castle, filled her with unwonted awe. The castle was said to have been the work of that imperious woman Semiramis, who was accustomed to retire to it, for what purposes no one knew; and it was certain that sounds were at times heard from the solid rock underneath its roots, which could be traced to no human inhabitant. Flavia endeavoured to recover herself; some fancy of the brain, she thought, had taken possession of her at the unusual words of her native language, even though proceeding from her own lips. After a moment she cast a wary glance around, as a startled child gives a furtive look at the object which has alarmed him. The moonlight fell full upon the central portion of the room, and for a moment she doubted whether her senses were failing her. But no; she distinctly saw the floor open, and a figure in human shape rise erect out of the ground. A moment more, and she gave a slight shriek and fainted.

CHAPTER V.

The Pursuit.

As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yearling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams. *Paradise Lost.*

THE next morning found the castle of Artemita in the utmost confusion. The Scythian chieftain had returned to it shortly before day, intending, in the course of the morning, to withdraw his more valuable effects to a distant settlement. He had given notice that he should instantly espouse his beautiful Roman captive. The daughters of his tribe were already envying her fortune. But when the chamber was opened, in which she had been confined the night before, it was found to be empty. The key had been entrusted to one of the most careful of the Scythian's followers, who had seen Flavia in her chamber when he locked the door; and his testimony was confirmed by the maiden who had visited her on the preceding evening. Even had she escaped from her own chamber, the staircase beneath was securely guarded. Yet the lattices of her window were secure, so that she could not have precipitated herself from the castle. Underneath, also, there were no marks that any one had fallen from the height above.

The sagacity of the Scythians was at fault, when a hunter, who was returning from the southern side of the lake, reported that a party had been seen riding rapidly in that direction ; that they were guided by one of the Huns from Mamgo's tribe ; and that a lady of Roman dress was among them. Instantly the Scythian camp was in motion ; and before night a powerful body of men was on its way along the southern bank of the lake ; while another party was coasting its northern side, in order to cut off that nearer access to Mamgo's territory. The evening was far advanced before either party saw any thing of the small body of fugitives, which was headed, as may be supposed, by Rutilius and Viriathes. They had coasted round the southern margin of the lake, hoping that, as it was not inhabited by the Scythians, they should escape pursuit. But just before dusk, one of the Huns informed the Armenian leader that he saw a party of Scythians, too large for them to oppose, in pursuit. "What do you counsel?" said Viriathes. "My advice is, that you encamp on the eminence opposite to us, and wait while I and one of my companions hasten, by different routes, to bring Mamgo and his Huns to your rescue. There are paths over the mountains by which we can pass, though I fear that the whole plain is occupied by the Scythians." Their horses were beginning to feel the effects of a day of labour ; and, after selecting a spot where a lofty grove of trees would secure them from the Scythian arrows, the party of fugitives de-

terminated to rest. Cutting down a few trees behind and around them, to intercept the charge of cavalry, and securing their horses in the midst, where the leaves of the trees which they had felled would yield them forage, they prepared to spend the night. Meanwhile two of the Huns, whose hardy beasts seemed incapable of fatigue, had passed on at a rapid rate in different directions.

It was not long before a large party of Scythians were seen on the plain below. But the darkness was now coming on apace; and as the fugitives had lighted no fire, and were completely covered in the wood which sheltered them, their enemies found it impossible to discover their retreat. And now Rutilius, who during the day had been too much occupied in hastening their retreat to do more than tell Flavia the general purpose of his coming, proceeded to give a more detailed account of all that had happened. Her first inquiries were after Marcellus. She was assured that he was safe. Where was he? He had been called by duty into Egypt, and had employed Rutilius to be on the watch whenever news arrived of her retreat. And how had she been removed from the tower of Artemita. All that she remembered was her alarm at what seemed a supernatural appearance; and she had only been recalled to recollection by the chill air which fanned her cheeks as she was borne hastily from the town. Rutilius explained why it had been necessary to subject her to such alarm. On his arrival in the town on the preceding evening, he had heard of the

unexpected return of the Scythian chieftain, and that next morning he would probably carry his prisoner into the desert. By the guidance of an Armenian, with whom Viriathes was acquainted, they had immediately examined the castle; and though on the lower part it was well guarded, they found that on its higher side the possessors trusted entirely to the inaccessible height of the precipice. Rutilius questioned their guide on the possibility of holding communication on this side with the prisoner above. At first he declared it to be impossible. At length, when the Roman offered a large sum if he would point out any way of access, the guide told him that it was believed that Queen Semiramis, the founder of the castle, had hollowed out the upper part of the rock, and that various chambers which were known to exist there had communication with one another. "It is possible," said the Armenian, "that through them a man may reach the summit; but no one has ever ventured on the attempt. Evil spirits are supposed to inhabit these caves by night, and the Scythians are even more to be dreaded during the day." This was just such an opportunity as Rutilius desired. His Armenian guide procured three ladders of great length from different persons in the place, which were firmly lashed together, and by the help of the two attendants were raised against the wall. They reached to a dark spot, which their guide had been assured was a passage which opened into the bottom of the subterranean chambers.

Every thing being arranged, Rutilius began to

ascend the ladder with a firm step, though their Armenian guide could scarcely be prevented from holding back Viriathes, whom he declared he should never again behold. Too much excited to share his alarm, they were only fearful lest they should be unable to make way along the narrow ravine, which, after creeping under a number of beetling rocks, suddenly admitted them into the body of the hill. A space of total darkness followed. They then emerged into a large chamber, lighted only by a narrow aperture in the rock, which rusty irons and human bones shewed to have served the double purpose of imprisonment and death. After a long search, a crevice enabled them to escape from this gloomy dungeon; and they made way by a projecting corner of rock into another apartment. On the way, they found the outside of the rock indented with the words of an earlier people, in that arrow-headed character, which, after the destruction of great part of this castle by Tamerlane, still excites the curiosity of travellers. But no such object detained them; they pressed onward, and by various degrees had nearly reached the summit of the natural rock, when they found all further passage impossible. If they looked out through the narrow crevices, which alone allowed the moonlight to enter, they could see nothing but a crag above, which projected over the precipice. They passed from one chamber to another, till they had thoroughly explored the whole range of caverns which they had reached. Every where it was vaulted over, and they were at a loss to conceive by what

means it could have been approached from the castle above. They were almost ready to abandon their enterprise, and to thread their way back, when the words of a Latin hymn were heard immediately above them; and from the clearness with which they could distinguish the sound, they felt assured that some communication existed between the chamber they had reached and the floor of that above it. Rutilius, who had lingered somewhat behind his companions, had been the first to distinguish the sound; and from the words and tune, which he knew were favourite ones with Marcellus, he was satisfied that the voice must be that of Flavia. A more close examination shewed him a small trap-door in one corner of the subterranean vault; and after once calling Flavia, he resolved to ascend, fearing lest any further sound should alarm the castle. For the same reason they could not await her recovery, but instantly carried her down, shutting carefully the door through which they had ascended. They found their guide beneath; and Flavia gradually recovered before they reached a place where they could safely rest.

But though what had appeared the greatest difficulty was surmounted, yet Rutilius felt that their present situation was not a little embarrassing. Till the Romans reached Artemita, they had not been aware that the Scythian chief had returned; and had expected that escape would be easy, so soon as Flavia was out of his grasp. It was with much anxiety, therefore, that Rutilius saw the light begin to display itself next morning, and perceived that

detachments of Scythians were wandering at considerable distances over the plain beneath. His small party remained closely hid in their place of concealment. But about noon a Scythian, who apparently had detected the footmarks of their horses, approached rapidly towards their encampment; and after coming near enough to satisfy himself that persons were in the wood, rode hastily back to give a signal to his fellows. In an hour's time, the whole plain was covered with horsemen in rapid advance. They had evidently expected to secure their prisoners at the first onset; for they rode up without order, each one holding his bow of horn in his left hand, and having his long and powerful arrow ready in his right. But Rutilius was prepared for their reception. His Roman soldiers were clad in armour, and had javelins of great weight, proper to hurl at short distances, or to strike a foe hand to hand. The Huns and Armenians were less securely defended; but their bows and arrows nearly resembled the weapons of the Scythians. The Huns had no clothing except the skins of animals; but the fur, which they had allowed to remain, was a sufficient protection against most weapons. Not till the Scythians had reached the felled trees which impeded their passage was any opposition made. They had already expended their first flight of arrows, and were thrown into confusion by this sudden obstruction, when Rutilius's soldiers, who had been sheltered beneath this breastwork against the flight of arrows,

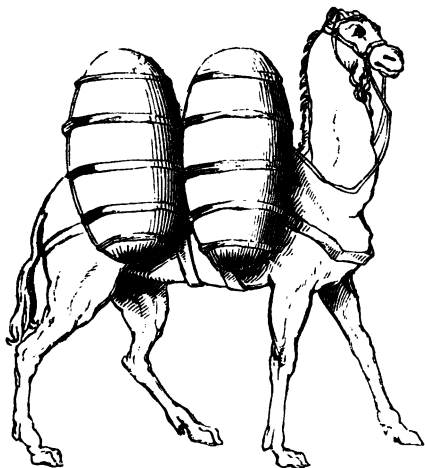
rose as one man, and rushed upon them with a shout. The arrows of the Huns and Armenians were discharged with deadly effect; the Romans dealt their thrusts hand to hand; and at least twenty Scythian horses ran masterless into the plain. The assailants fled on every side; and though they continued to make feigned attacks, yet, being utterly unaccustomed to engage except in the open field, they did not venture on any second assault upon the Roman encampment.

The Romans passed the day under arms; but their situation became most distressing when the evening approached, and no assistance was at hand. Their provisions were totally exhausted, and they could not even venture to an adjoining rivulet for water. Their enemies shewed no disposition to retire, and they had reason to fear lest in the night-time they might be attacked and overwhelmed by numbers. As soon, therefore, as darkness favoured them, they determined on continuing their retreat. Flavia was placed in the centre, Rutilius being on one side, and Viriathes on the other; the Huns rode in front to guide, the Armenians and Romans behind to defend the party. At first they seemed to escape the observation of the enemy, who were still mustered in large numbers in front of their camp. But a wild cry behind them convinced them that their stratagem was discovered. Still, as their horses were fresh, they hoped before morning to accomplish a march which should place them beyond the pursuit of the Scythians. But when they had ridden for about

three hours as fast as the inequality of ground would permit, and had reached a narrow ravine, where their path finally left the neighbourhood of the great lake which had hitherto been stretched on their right hand, they found the pass, which it was essential to traverse, guarded by a large body of Scythians. The moon had now risen; and as they rode through the dark bottom of the valley, they could see the wild figures of these children of the desert moving rapidly about on the brow of the eminence before them. So close was their order, that the outline of their dark mass drove by, as the rack may sometimes be seen to do in front of the brighter groundwork of the sky. As there was no other passage, the heavy-armed Roman horsemen were put in front, Rutilius himself taking the lead. Thus ordered, they galloped upon the enemy, and were fortunate enough to escape with but few wounds from the shower of arrows which met them. The Scythians did not await a close attack, but fled right and left from the armed body, closing afterwards like the waters round the keel of a vessel. They had suffered somewhat from this sudden attack; but in a few minutes they were again in pursuit, and the flight of arrows which they discharged made a second sally of the Romans necessary. And now Rutilius put in execution a stratagem of which he remembered to have read in the campaigns of Xenophon. When his Roman soldiers had made their attack, a signal for the charge had been given by the trumpet. When this had been twice repeated, and

the Scythians had each time suffered considerably from the superior weight of the Roman weapons, he prepared his men at its next sound to adopt an exactly contrary course. The Scythians again drew near ; their arrows began to rattle against the Roman armour. Rutilius called to his men to stop, and made preparation for a new sally. A furious blast was blown with the trumpet. The Scythians, acquainted with the signal, fled in precipitation. The Romans, prepared for the occasion, fled with equal rapidity in the contrary direction ; and such progress had they made before the Scythians could detect the stratagem, that they saw no more of them for a considerable part of the night ; and then the pursuers appeared only to be themselves routed ; for a large body of Huns, headed by Mamgo, was now entering the defile, which they had been following during some hours ; and their presence at once compelled the Scythians to fly. Rutilius could now retreat slowly ; and before evening, he was able to conduct the wearied Flavia to the encampment of the Huns. There she enjoyed a few days' rest ; and then, attended by Viriathes and Rutilius, she passed the mountains to Nisibis. As Marcellus was not yet returned, Rutilius undertook, at her earnest desire, to conduct her into Egypt. They pursued their way by land to Tyre ; and then the young Roman, having met with the master of a ship with whom he was acquainted, took rather a hasty leave of his charge, alleging that business prevented him from visiting Egypt, and

that the short remaining distance would be performed safely enough under the guidance of his friend. Flavia expressed her sorrow ; she wished, she said, that Marcellus himself should testify the gratitude which she knew that he would feel towards his young relation. But Rutilius seemed fixed in his resolution ; and, after agreeing therefore with the master of the ship, who promised to conduct her to Marcellus so soon as they landed in Egypt, she sailed from Tyre the second day after their arrival.



From the column of Theodosius

CHAPTER VI.

The Platonist.

Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught
By me proposed in life contemplative
Or active, tended on by glory or fame,
What dost thou in this world ? the wilderness
For thee is fittest place.

Paradise Regained.

RUTILIUS watched the departure of the vessel in which Flavia had embarked, and then turned back to consider how he should employ his leisure, now that the object was withdrawn to which he had so long directed his attention. The nature of his feelings towards her he had never exactly realised to himself. He had sought her first as the object of an uncertain adventure ; and his ardent and romantic temper would have found sufficient recompense in the risk and interest of the enterprise. He had afterwards viewed her as his uncle's betrothed bride, and his generous spirit forbade him to mix one selfish feeling with his admiration and respect. Yet, in the familiar intercourse of their journey, the thought would occasionally arise, that so young a person could hardly have that perfect sympathy with a man of his uncle's age, to which her earnestness of character seemed to entitle her ; and, notwithstanding

her anxiety to see Marcellus, there was not, he thought, the manner of one who was hastening to meet a lover.

These circumstances had gradually produced an effect upon his mind, which the purity of his feelings would altogether have prevented, had she been already united to another. The consciousness of his feelings had dictated his sudden resolution to stop at Tyre, instead of proceeding, as had been his original intention, to Alexandria. But it was not till he saw the vessel under weigh, and Flavia waving her hand to him as she sat in its lofty stern, that he felt the full bitterness of spirit which the separation produced. He seemed, for the first time in his life, to be without an object. During his younger years he had been carried away by the hopes of literary eminence which Athens offered, and had risen to early distinction among his associates; but as he grew in years, he seemed to stand in need of some more active employment. Eloquence had in former days swayed the world; but now he found that power was only to be procured by the sword of the legions. He left Athens thirsting for the military glory to which he hoped that his uncle's influence would open a path. He had joined his uncle only to learn that the ample opportunities, which might otherwise have existed for his promotion, were cut off; because the veteran soldier had been, as he thought, unhappily tainted by the Christian superstition. Just at the moment

when his prospects had been thus blighted, his path had been crossed by the beautiful vision which was now melting before his eyes. He had found a temporary object in the interest of Flavia's rescue, and since that time in ministering to her comfort. Her anxiety to set before him the excellences of the Christian system had certainly rendered it more attractive in his eyes, though his prejudices had not yielded to her influence ; but his thoughts had been so fully occupied by her presence, that he had never remembered what a void her absence would produce. Ambition seemed for the last two months to have gone to sleep, and refused to wake up in a moment for the relief of the mind which had abandoned it. What should he do ? To visit the friends of his family—the avowed object of his remaining at Tyre—was an effort to which his spirits were unequal. Yet, if he left the place, whither should he go ? He could not bring himself to return to his family at Antioch ; for the luxury and dissipation of that wealthy capital seemed to pall upon him, oppressed as he was with the feeling of the disappointing nature of all earthly enjoyments. The only thing which relieved the craving misery of his emotions was the sight of those natural objects, which remain still the same amidst all the varieties of mortal feeling, and, like the rocks which overhang the sea, reflect some shadow of their abiding existence upon the fluctuating waves of thought. The varied coast, therefore, in the neighbourhood of Tyre, the lofty heights of Lebanon,

its wintry summit, its ancient woods,—these he trod for days together, especially when storms ravaged the coast, and when the gigantic cedars were shaken to their roots. At such times he would review what Viriathes had told him of the intense interest with which the Christian community watched the gradual growth of their faith, and of their firm conviction that it would one day spread itself as widely as the world of waters which he saw extended below him. Then would come the remembrance of that sweetness and delicacy of mind which he had seen in Flavia, and how she had adorned the principles which she professed. One day, as he was meditating on these subjects upon the shore, at no great distance from Tyre, he was startled by the sound of his own name; and saw, at turning, an elderly man of a singularly intelligent and penetrating countenance, whom he at once recognised as a teacher of philosophy whom he had known at Athens. He wore the cloak which marked his profession; and his commanding manner shewed that he was accustomed to deference from his disciples.

“Rutilius,” he said, “do I see you on this shore, where gold is the only thing men care about? Have you changed Apollo for Plutus, and sacrificed the fame of Athens for the wealth of a Phœnician merchant?”

“I am but a stranger here,” replied Rutilius; “and wealth is to me of as little value as reputation.”

"Spoken like a philosopher," replied the other ; "I see you did not study Aristotle's rules respecting happiness in vain. But what is your present pursuit? Have you retired into these woods alone, to solve any of those difficulties which yet perplex our inquiries? Are you considering the grand question, how Aristotle and Plato are to be reconciled ; and have you satisfied yourself whether Pythagoras first learned the doctrine of abstract essences in this land?"

"You speak," said Rutilius, "as if you were still amidst the groves of Academus. I can remember the intense interest which such inquiries then excited ; but of late I have found in them less satisfaction."

"I suspect that you are suffering under the madness of love."

"No," replied the young man, rather faintly ; "I am not in love. My affliction is, that I have no object ; I have tried every thing—all ends in disappointment."

"If this is your feeling," said the philosopher, "follow me. I am staying for a time in Tyre, where I have kinsmen ; and I promise to open to you sufficient sources of interest to satisfy your mind. Your state," he added, as they walked together along the shore, "is not uncommon, though it belongs only to superior understandings, such as yours was shewn to be during your stay at Athens. It is enough for men in general to be employed in seek-

ing for wealth, or expending it; to be hewers of wood or drawers of water for the real masters of the world. The cattle who draw a wagon seem to be moving it; but it is the directing mind which rules its motion, to which the whole machine is subservient. So it is with those of us who have heart to rise superior to the vulgar objects, of which you appear to have discerned the vanity. We draw near to the true Source of power; we are swallowed up in Him; we discern the secrets of the universe in our mysterious intercourse with its Author; we look behind the veil of matter, perceive its vanity, and are lost in the fruition of the Godhead. This is the sublime life which was so long led by my master Plotinus, and to which I myself am proud to have attained. Yes," he continued, with a sort of frenzied inspiration, "why need I further linger, as Hesiod says, about rock or tree: was not I who speak to you but yesterday so entranced with the spectacle of the world of thought, that for a season I totally lost myself, my spirit travelled forth and held intercourse with the only true reality; and I perceived that there is no existence except in thought?"¹ He continued to talk in this manner as he walked homewards, accompanied by Rutilius, who was a good deal impressed, as well by the confidence as the nature of his promises. He soon saw that the young man was dissatisfied by the grossness of idolatry;

¹ Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*.

but that no other system had as yet taken possession of his mind. "Depend upon it," he exclaimed, "your meeting me will be exactly like Plotinus's first entrance into the school of Ammonius, when he turned round, and said to his friend, 'This is the very man I was in search of.'¹ I see that you long for something higher than the low cares of this world can give, and yet that the barrenness of the ordinary idol-worship gives you no content. To whom then ought you to come, but to such as I am? The philosopher is the priest² of the supreme God; his study is the whole of nature, and those various operations of which it is the scene. The ordinary priests worship none but the inferior Deities."

Before Rutilius took his leave, he asked his companion's name, that he might visit him next morning.

"Here," said the philosopher, "I pass by my hereditary name of Malchus. At Athens you may remember that I was called, after the custom of the Greeks, by one borrowed from their own language. My own name in our ancient tongue, which is nearly the same with that of the older sacred writings of the Christians, means *king*; and because the Tyrian monarchs were clad in their native purple, my brother philosophers, from the Greek name for that colour, call me Porphyry."

It was with this celebrated enemy of the Christian faith that Rutilius had fallen in; and to him he

¹ Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*.

² Porphyry on *Abstinence*, ii. 37.

went the next morning, curious as well to see how far he could fulfil his promise, as to learn something respecting that singular sect of the younger Platonists, which had grown up within a few years, and numbered Porphyry among its chief leaders. With the general history of the Greek philosophy Rutilius had become familiar while he lived at Athens. He knew that it dated to the time of Socrates as the grand era when truth and reason began to prevail. Till then those who called themselves wise men had only amused their hearers with groundless speculations on the nature and origin of the world ; some saying that every thing consisted of watery, others of earthy atoms ; but no one attending to the practical questions which men were interested to know. Every philosopher whom he had attended referred to Socrates as the author of his inquiries. This great man had shewn his fellows that their main business was the study of themselves ; that it was idle to speculate about the universe around, till the little universe of man's own heart was at peace. And by thus directing them to a practical subject, and one in which they could make some real progress, he had given a new stimulus to the reasoning powers, which had even made men better observers of outward nature. This Rutilius had particularly observed in the instance of Aristotle, who had made the first accurate inquiry into natural history. His celebrated book on animals, as well as the discoveries of Archimedes, had only been the

carrying of the Socratic method from the moral into the natural world. When Rutilius was at Athens, he had found those four schools of philosophers still flourishing, which had arisen from the impulse given by Socrates to the world of thought. Besides the Platonists or Academics, and the Peripatetic philosophers, who called Aristotle their master, he had been a hearer of the Stoics and the Epicureans. The last he had never been able to endure; he had seen their principles brought forward as the excuse for the sensuality of the period, which his mind was naturally too refined to relish; and though he knew that some metaphysical doctors of this school professed that no such consequences followed from their arguments, yet he could not but judge their doctrine by its ordinary effects. With the Stoics he had been much better pleased, particularly by their attention to the practical rules of moral and political philosophy. The philosophers of the Lycæum and Academy, as the disciples of Aristotle and Plato were respectively called, though they seemed to him to deal in moral principles of a far higher tone than those of the Stoics—referring man to the sense of original duty, while the Stoics had appealed chiefly to his pride of heart—had yet perplexed him by recurring so constantly to metaphysical subtleties. Their constant topic was the origin of men's ideas, and the degree of evidence that what was presented to him by his senses had any existence independent of himself. By speculations of this kind, the followers

both of Plato and Aristotle, and in a measure even these philosophers themselves, had made a false application of the principles of Socrates. He had confined his attention to men's actions, and to their judgments on what was right and wrong; and had therefore taught his followers to refer back every individual decision to certain hidden but universal laws, which had their root in man's inner nature. These laws depended on those principles of judgment respecting human duty, which, though they require to be called out, or educated (to use the word in its original sense), by a practical attention to individual actions, yet have their sanction in the unalterable decisions of the heart. Now, from perceiving that these general determinations, though they had no apparent existence except in man's thought, were yet the real principles of morals, the philosophers of the Socratic school were led to look in every case for similar realities—for a species of universal ideas, possessing a more real existence, more fruitful, living, and valuable, than the individual instances which suggested them. Of this nature were Plato's ideas, which he set forth as abstractions of the mind, in which all the reality of external things was gathered together. And a notion somewhat similar, though differently expressed and more partially acted upon, pervades the system of Aristotle.

The followers of these great men, whom Rutilius had attended, when they succeeded to the inheritance of their master's theories, had employed themselves

in pulling down, rather than in building up. The uncertainty of all knowledge of individual objects—the absence of positive evidence that what we see is any thing but an impression on the senses—men's consequent state of doubt, whether they have any real assurance of the existence of that which seems to be going on around them,—this was their favourite topic. Plato had taught them that there existed a reality greater than that of external objects, if men could but find it; but, for their part, they contented themselves with shewing how possible it was that the external objects which men fancied to exist were at all events nothing but a vision. On this point they were perpetually battling with the Stoics, who took every thing in its simplest form, called every thing by its own name, and were the advocates of all existing institutions, not excepting even the puerilities of the popular superstition.

Rutilius, who was dissatisfied both with the coarseness of the Porch (so the Stoic school was called) and with the subtlety of the Academy, hoped that Porphyry would lead him into that higher application of Plato's doctrine, which was said to have been lately discovered. Plotinus, the principal teacher of these new truths, had settled at Rome. He had in reality only obeyed the impulse which was at this period leading all philosophers to ally their theories to some positive system of revealed truth. The old schools had now existed above five hundred years—they had exhausted all the natural

topics of thought—had built up all the open ground of men's imagination with imposing structures—and yet nothing real, tangible, and satisfactory, had appeared. The doubtful and afflicted still needed a home, yet could find none. There was nothing to satisfy men's craving for a bliss which should be abiding and sufficient. Yet, as in all outward matters, the stern, practical, business-like spirit of the Roman was found to prevail over the versatile subtlety of the Greek ; so in the region of man's spirit, something substantial was looked for to explain the empty theories of an earlier age. This was part of God's providential preparation for that Church of Christ, the true haven of the weary and afflicted, for which philosophy had in fact prepared the way by shewing its necessity. Philosophy had sounded the depths, and discovered the chill desolation of the world of waters, at the very moment when the ark drew near, in which was to be found safety, certainty, and contentment.

But while this tendency in man's feelings favoured the growth of the Christian faith, it also fostered a multitude of ancient superstitions, which, hid before in different countries of the East, were now brought out and blended with the ancient philosophy. Plotinus had been so sensible of his need of such assistance, that he had visited the East in the train of the Emperor Gordien, in order to converse with Indian and Chaldæan sages. The more complete union of the notions of Plato with the tra-

ditions of the East was effected a little after the period of this narrative, when Jamblichus and Hierocles, who were settled at Alexandria, professed to explain the Greek philosopher by reference to the revelations of early fable. But Plotinus was sufficiently imbued with the same spirit to believe that all true knowledge must come from a perception of abstract truths, which could be gained only by a mystic union with the Deity. Thus he looked for a perpetual revelation, but without that miraculous sanction which had proved the reality of the Christian. Like a man whose eyes are obstructed by a cataract, he was sensible that light had dawned upon the earth; but prejudice had so far blinded his sense, that he knew not in which quarter the Sun of Righteousness had arisen. He could not but feel that supernatural communications were abroad in the world; but he had not learnt where to find them. Established prejudices prevented him from doing justice to the assertions of the Christians; and what little he knew of them was the less likely to conciliate his attention, because it was chiefly of those wild Gnostic writers who had even outgone himself in error. These Gnostic speculators had a great likeness to the philosophers who had preceded Socrates: both parties employed themselves in forming visionary theories of the universe; but the ancient philosophers of Greece had taken their notions from external objects; while Scripture, mixed with popular fiction, was the subject-matter of the Gnostic fables.

When Rutilius betook himself to Porphyry for an introduction to that mysterious wisdom which the philosophers of this school professed to possess, he found that his master, instead of that measure of doubt which had prevailed among the Academic philosophers, professed a total disbelief in outward things. They had merely asserted that there *might* be impressions which had no counterpart in external nature ; but he positively denied that any thing existed except in our own thought. Not that he pretended to that full conviction on this subject, which was gained, he said, by his master Plotinus. "I once went so far," he told Rutilius, "as to write against this position of my instructor, and to maintain that those objects which produce impressions upon us through our senses have an inherent reality. Plotinus employed my fellow-disciple Aurelius to answer me ; and so irresistible were his arguments, that after three days I was compelled to yield. I had felt, indeed, from the first, that Plotinus must be right ; but I had wished to put him to the test, and to do full justice to the objections which had arisen in my own mind. Not," he said, "that you can understand this subject, till, by abstracting your mind from all earthly objects, you enter into that union with the Deity, which may shew you those universal truths which are the only proper realities."

By holding out hopes of this sort, Porphyry retained his hold over the young Roman ; though his

¹ Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*.

pupil soon felt a want of reality and of practical meaning in his system. They often conversed at Porphyry's house, and frequently walked to some gardens at a distance from the town. There a Stoic philosopher, named Crito, would sometimes take part in their conversation.

"Your system," said the Stoic one day, "has much in it, no doubt, that is sublime; but it is greatly wanting in applications to practical life. We live not in a state of halcyon calm, but amidst the tumult of this great empire, where men need to be guarded against the moral contagion which prevails every where around them. Remember what Cicero said,—that he could not act upon the rules which he had received from your philosophy, because he lived 'not in the republic of Plato, but among the dregs of Romulus.' Had he but drank, as Cato did, of the pure draught of the Stoic discipline, he might perhaps have saved Rome from her degradation through the ambition of Cæsar."

"I do not believe," said Porphyry, "that any thing could have saved Rome at that time from the despotism which was the necessary consequence of her vices. But so far are our doctors from thinking that these precepts might not be practically exhibited, that my master Plotinus, in order to afford the most perfect model of a happy community, entreated the Emperor Gordien, who was at times one of his hearers, to allow him to occupy a small deserted town in Campania with a colony of Platonists."

The Stoic smiled at what even he felt to be a visionary scheme. "What," he said, "prevented the undertaking?"

"The influence of some about the emperor. Had we ever had one of our disciples invested with the purple," continued Porphyry, "the design might have been tried with success. But as to the hopes of you Stoics, why was not your teacher, the Emperor Antoninus, able, by all his influence, to realise them? Was the world permanently better for this example of a Stoic in supreme command?"

The Stoic could not say that Aurelius had permanently reformed mankind: he muttered something about the neglect of the ancient religion, which had withdrawn those restraints by which the mass of men had previously been ruled.

"True," said Porphyry, "the popular religion, rightly understood, might be of great avail. But unhappily you Stoics have undertaken the defence of its gross corruptions, and thus have joined in lowering the majesty of the gods. The great king of all," he exclaimed, quoting a favourite saying of his school, "is the sole originator."

"This is the very doctrine of our great Cleanthes," replied the other; and he proceeded to repeat the celebrated Stoical hymn to Jupiter.

First of immortals, praised by many a name,
Great nature's chief, by laws for aye the same,—
All hail!—For thee, O Jove, all mortals own;
Sprung from thy race, thine impress, and alone

Faint echo of thy power from lower earth :
Thee thus we sing, the parent of our birth.
Nor thee without is aught that earth contains,
Heaven's blue abyss, or ocean's boundless plains,
Save what, in despite of thy sage decree,
The sinner works against his destiny.
Of chaos order, of contention peace,
Thou know'st to form, and bid confusion cease ;
Who thee forsakes, in sin his bliss to find,
Forsakes his own felicity of mind ;
But who thy wisdom's just command obeys,
Unlocks the blessed store of prosperous days.
Does fame still flatter men—does gain delight,
And pleasure tempt them by its treacherous slight ?
Then, Jove, all-bountiful, the thunder's lord,
From their own folly save this race abhorred ;
Purge the dark spot that to their soul adheres,
That order teach which rules the innumerable spheres ;
That we, in turn, thy glory may proclaim,
And hymn, as fits us, thy majestic name :
Nor man nor god can aught ennoble more
Than law's eternal empire to adore.

"A noble poem this," said Porphyry ; "but how far is this removed from the vulgar feeling of our common worshippers ! There is an inscription, for example, under that image ;—let us draw near and look at it ; in all likelihood it is something which will rather degrade the being it is meant to honour."

The statue was the god Priapus,—a roughly carved block of wood, which had little to distinguish it from a number of logs, intended apparently for firing, which lay beneath it. Below was

an inscription from Martial, which Porphyry read aloud,—

“Priapus, nothing rich nor rare,
But a few stumps are here your care;
Yet see your zeal this charge secures;
What difference in their birth and yours?
Remember, if the hearth be cold,
Yourself was but a log of old.

What possible respect can men feel for a supposed divinity, which they can insult by such threats as this?”

The Stoic did not deny the unsuitableness of the lines; “Yet,” he said, “the superstition which fixes such an image in this place is part of an ancient system which is far better than that which prevails at present. Deformed as it is, I would rather see it; just as I should prefer this garden, if, according to old custom, the trees were allowed to grow into their natural shapes, instead of being cut into the regular forms, and intersected by the neat walks which belong to your modern fashions.”

“There,” said Porphyry, “I agree with you. I think with Juvenal, that the natural swath of Egeria’s fountain was far preferable to the finest marble embankment.

How much more beauteous were the scene,
Its native turf-banks stretched between,
Where nought that spake the hand of man
Should mar great nature’s simple plan !”

While occupied in such conversation, there came up a stranger, who, though not marked out by his

dress as a philosopher, yet had something in his manner and appearance which bespoke the professed student. Rutilius at first wondered who he could be ; but, on near approach, remembered to have met him at the house of a relation, whom he occasionally visited, and to have been favourably impressed by his appearance and manner.

“ Are you a disciple of one of these philosophers ?” said Pamphilus, for that was the stranger’s name, as Rutilius seemed about to follow his companions, who were just quitting the garden.

“ I am a hearer of Malchus,” said Rutilius ; “ but I have never professed myself, and perhaps never shall, his disciple.”

“ I am going towards the city,” said Pamphilus, “ and, if you please, will accompany you.”

As the two philosophers seemed completely occupied with one another, Rutilius accepted the offer, and soon fell into conversation, to which the other seemed anxious to lead, on the subjects which were at this moment occupying his mind.

“ So you have become a hearer of this renowned philosopher of ours,” said Pamphilus, “ in order to learn the secret of that happiness which elsewhere you could not attain ? Do you find your attempt successful ?”

“ By no means,” said Rutilius ; “ I cannot deny the ingenuity of his arguments ; but his teaching is without reality, and the subjects which he treats of do not come home to my heart. If this be all that

philosophy can offer, I might as well seek to find my happiness in the pleasures of life."

"And why cannot you find your happiness in them?" said his companion.

"I scarce know why I cannot," said Rutilius: "perhaps it is the effect of early disappointment. Certainly the things of this life pall upon me: I have riches, which many want, yet find in them no comfort; and I perceive already the truth of that saying of Aristotle, that men in general desire nothing but external goods, whereas they ought to desire that such external goods as they possess may be blessed to their benefit."

"The old philosopher speaks truly," said Pamphilus, "and with his usual wisdom; but have you tried his other rule, to free yourself from earthly adhesions, to follow the guidance of your immortal part, and lead such a divine life as superior beings must approve."

"Alas," said Rutilius, "this is what Porphyry says to me. But it is too cold and cheerless; I cannot grasp it. I doubt my ability to lead that elevated sort of life to which you refer; and even if I could, I see no satisfaction which would follow. I want the sympathy of beings who can enter into my wants. And yet what I read of our popular gods rather disgusts than attracts me. But even our philosophers confess that affection is a necessary part of man's being. Does not Aristotle say that the best part of

friendship consists in loving others, and that our love grows stronger the more we exercise it?"

"You want, then," said Pamphilus, "some object higher and more lasting than this world can give, but of a kind worthy of your affection?"

"This is what I want, yet despair to find."

"Say not so," said the other. "I have before now experienced your feelings; but at present I have learnt where to seek such an object as you desire. I can tell you of such a home for your thoughts as you seem to need—of a comfort which is at once practical and sublime, true, yet inspiring. But it is too late, neither is this the place, to enter upon so sacred a subject."

CHAPTER VII.

The Christian Philosopher.

Souls are not Spaniards too. One friendly flood
Of baptism blends them all into a blood;
Christ's faith makes but one body of all souls,
And love 's that body's soul.

CRASHAW.

HAD Pamphilus rudely proclaimed himself a Christian, the young man would probably have thought no more of his words. But as his companion stopped short of this point, Rutilius called upon him next morning to renew the conversation.

"Tell me," he said, "what secret of happiness is this which you possess."

He heard with surprise an avowal of Pamphilus's faith in Christ. "I thought," he said, "that this profession belonged only to unlearned men. And what Porphyry has told me of the Gnostics shews that your doctors are not free from the wildest and most fanciful reveries."

"The Gnostics are no doctors of ours," said Pamphilus.

Rutilius. "How? do they not call themselves Christians?"

Pamphilus. "Many assuredly do; but they have

left that one fold of the Catholic Church to which all the benefits of which I have spoken belong. You must know well, stranger though you be to our institutions, that in every quarter of the Roman empire, ay, and beyond it, our system extends; and it is to those only who are thus in union with one another that we give the name of Christians."

Rutilius thought of Viriathes the Armenian, who, though the subject of another king, had yet professed that he was one in faith with the Christians of the empire; and he replied, "Indeed, you Christians do seem to me to make up a kingdom of your own, which has its own laws, while it extends its ramifications through various nations; just as our midland sea extends its arms and branches among the most barbarous as well as the most civilised countries."

Pamphilus. "Your comparison is most exact; for, as some philosophers tell us, that in all these seas the water stands at the same level, so our widely scattered brethren, by being united into one body, retain the same rules, and continue members one of another. Perhaps you are not aware that our being thus a kingdom within a kingdom, a separate people, having our own government—an empire, in truth, though not offering any disloyalty to our earthly rulers,—is exactly one of those things which were long ago predicted, and to the complete fulfilment of which we look with confidence. Did you ever hear of the prophecies of Daniel?"

Rutilius. "I heard Porphyry speak of his per-

dictions respecting Antiochus and the Ptolemies, which seemed to him, he said, so exact, that he felt persuaded they must have been uttered after the incidents they speak of."

"We have historical evidence," said Pamphilus, "that his suspicion is ill-founded. Independently of the testimony of the Jews, who are not inclined to overrate Daniel's prophecy, because it refers so plainly to the Messiah, we have a proof of the antiquity of the book in the Greek version of the Old Testament, which was made at least 550 years ago; and the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, you know, did not take place till at least 100 years afterwards. And if Porphyry can in this way get rid of the earlier fulfilments of Daniel's prophecy, what does he say to the later ones?"

As Pamphilus spoke, he unrolled a parchment volume of the Septuagint which lay on the table, and read the vision of Nebuchadnezzar from Daniel's prophecy;—he paused upon the latter portion: "'And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. . . . And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings

shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.' Is not this portion of the prophecy by itself," continued Pamphilus, " a proof of the wisdom of the Being in whose name Daniel spoke? You know the nature of your heathen oracles, how they palter and equivocate, and speak only respecting what is immediately at hand. How could Daniel know so long beforehand, that such an empire as Rome would arise after the destruction of the power of Greece ; and further, that it was exactly as this empire was beginning to decay, that the sacred kingdom of the Christians should be established? He seems to mean, that there will arise no other earthly empire of like importance. This is by no means improbable, though its fulfilment must be judged of by posterity ; but so far as the positive part of his prediction goes, we have sufficient proof of its accuracy."

" What you say is remarkable," said Rutilius ; " yet I have been accustomed to hear of so many predictions in which I have placed little credit, that I find it difficult to repose much confidence in such statements."

" I don't wonder at it," Pamphilus said ; " the truth is, that prophecies, like other proofs of the reality of our system, are more fitted to confirm than to make men Christians. It is the same even

in respect to miracles. There are many instances, no doubt, where signal miracles wrought in the presence of the ignorant have been the means of their immediate conversion. But in general they have been rather employed as a proof of a Divine commission to those who are already within the Church, and for their comfort and satisfaction, than for the sake of those without the fold. Our Master Himself could do no mighty works in His own country, because of men's unbelief. At present, when no miracles of a very decided nature, and few of any sort, are wrought, this is altogether the case; it was so in a great measure even in the days of the first Apostles."

Rutilius. "To what, then, do you refer the rapid extension of your body?"

Pamphilus. "Its prevalence is, no doubt, in great measure to be traced to its being so exactly fitted to the nature of man. Not that it is of a kind to be popular; far otherwise. It requires much self-denial, and many things to be abandoned. But there are always a certain number of people who need comfort, who find the world incapable of giving them satisfaction, who look round for some more real and abiding support; and to such minds the cross of Christ, however the world may scorn it, is a welcome object."

"Alas," said Rutilius, "you have well expressed my own wants; tell me only how I shall find their satisfaction."

Pamphilus. "For the young and uninstructed who

ask this question, long training is often needed, that they may understand and appreciate the blessings of the Gospel. But with you, who have felt the need of sympathy, and understand how waste and desolate is the world when the sun of God's light is obscured, I may take a shorter course. Let me point out to you, then, that Object, after which men's longing anticipations yearned for so many ages in vain. What was Plato's saying, that if virtue could shew herself in a bodily form, all men would be enamoured with her beauty, but a feeling that mankind needed something in which all the characters of wisdom and goodness, of which we conceive when we think of the Divine nature, should be perfectly set forth? Again : what do all those sacrifices signify, by which in all ages men have thought to expiate their sins, but that they are conscious of a burden of guilt, from which they must be freed before they can be happy? Now in Jesus Christ, and Him alone, you have an example of perfect purity, and at the same time a sufficient atonement for those transgressions which lie heavy on the conscience. In order to enter into these truths, you must, of course, give our system a fair trial. You must study the character of our Master in those writings in which His followers have preserved His sayings and His acts. But, what is much more, you must experience the effects of that presence of His, by the spiritual influence which He still diffuses, whereby up to this day He enters into union with all faithful hearts and

makes them His own. This is a gradual influence, which partakes of the nature of a moral habit; and you will remember what Aristotle remarks concerning such powers, that they are of a kind which none can understand but those who experience their effects."

"This notion of an union with the Deity," said Rutilius, "is one of which I have heard much among the philosophers, but is it not rather an enthusiastic and visionary feeling? Porphyry himself professed to have experienced it. Plotinus, he says, did so constantly. It seems to them a sign that they are in favour with God. But what proof do they give me that it is any thing more than a trick of the imagination? It is dangerous when a man acts even for himself upon no better evidence than such impressions on his mind; how, then, can he expect them to be received as evidence by others?"

"You say truly," replied Pamphilus; "a mere impression upon a man's mind, since it may proceed from his own fancy, is no sufficient argument to himself, much less to others. And this was why I spoke of miracles as a confirmation to the faithful. The holy Apostles, who have left us various rules in the sacred writings, proved, by the miracles they wrought, that God was truly with them in the utterance of their words. If any one was to arise in this day, and undertake to teach or exercise Church-offices, without having received an authority which came from them, we should require that he also

should work miracles, and so prove that his claim to teach was derived not from his own fancy, but from the command of God."

Rutilius. "But how is it that at this day any persons can have an authority from your Apostles to exercise offices among you? You spoke just now of the Apostles as being the immediate followers of your Messiah—they have long been dead, therefore—and I know that your Church is at present governed by your bishops."

Pamphilus. "From whom, then, do you suppose these bishops to have their authority?"

"I have always heard," said Rutilius, "that they profess to speak by the authority of your Master Jesus Christ."

Pamphilus. "It is true; but the king's officers must know through whom they receive the king's commission. How, then, do you suppose our bishops to have it?"

Rutilius. "I remember an assemblage while I was living at Antioch, which was said to be for the appointment of a bishop among the Christians; and then all the ancient bishops of the neighbourhood attended, and admitted him, as I understood, to their own order."

Pamphilus. "It was through the bishops, therefore, who preceded him, that his commission came, and of course it was the same with each of them when they were themselves admitted to the office. The first bishops who were thus chosen were ap-

pointed by the Apostles themselves ; and they might as fitly have borne the name of Apostles, had they not been unwilling to take upon themselves so honoured an appellation. Indeed, in one of our sacred writings, the book of Revelations, they are called the angels of the Churches ; and the word ‘ angel,’ you know, means the same as ‘ apostle.’ Thus it is that the apostolic office is still among us ; and here, too, we see a fulfilment of one of our prophecies. The office still continues, after two hundred and fifty years, though, in the meantime, we have seen the empire so often throw out its possessors. Wherever there are Christians throughout the world, there are bishops, descending by succession from the Apostles ; and this agreement of men so widely scattered seems to us a fulfilment of our Lord’s promise to the order of His Apostles, ‘ I am with you always, even to the end of the world.’ ”

Rutilius. “ But why do you lay so much stress on the succession of your bishops ? The Roman empire has still continued to be a monarchy, though its rulers have been of various families. If you have officers to bear rule in your churches, what difference does it make how you get them ? ”

“ Our bishops,” said Pamphilus, “ are not merely rulers ; they are an essential part in the chain by which the blessings which our Church contains are bestowed upon mankind. You said just now, that you thought the union with our Master Christ, of which I spoke, was but a sort of mystical delusion,

like the trance in which Porphyry alleges that he enters into communion with the Divinity ;—I suppose you think that we have no better means than he had of knowing whether this mystical union is truly attained ?”

Rutilius intimated that such was his feeling.

Pamphilus. “ And you think that we ought to have some outward proof which we can produce to another,—such, for instance, as the power of miracles,—if we would be well assured that we in truth hold intercourse with the Deity ?”

Rutilius. “ Yes.”

Pamphilus. “ But you would not think it necessary that a separate sign should on each occasion attest the reality of such a Divine presence ? If the Divine presence had on one occasion given a distinct mark by which such intercourse might be known, would not it suffice for future guidance ?”

“ It certainly would,” answered Rutilius.

“ Let me give you, then,” said Pamphilus, “ some account of what will be more distinctly explained to you if you become a learner in our school. Communion with Christ is not among us sought for vaguely and at random, and referred to the test of our private feelings ;—He has appointed a means by which it may be obtained, and all the supernatural blessings which follow from it. This means we call **THE HOLY COMMUNION**, because in it we communicate with Him ; or the eucharist, because it is the sacrifice of our thanks. And just as Gentile worshippers are bound

together by sacrificing to the same idol, and feeding together on what has been offered ; so do Christians, in the sacrifice of remembrance which this eucharist affords, enter into communion with one another and with Christ."

"You said just now," replied Rutilius, "when speaking of the offerings of the heathen, that the sacrifice of your Master had made that perfect atonement which they could never effect. But it seems that you yourselves still continue to offer sacrifices."

"But not sacrifices of atonement," replied the other. "Our eucharist is but a sacrifice of remembrance. In the strictest sense of the word, it is no sacrifice at all ; for, like the offerings of the Jews, it does not make expiation for sin ; it only *carries on* as they *anticipated*, the true and sufficient sacrifice ; —but it is a shewing Christ's death—a recalling His sacrifice ; and it bears the name of that of which it is an exhibition. But I must return to what I was saying. It is a part of the bishop's office, that none but he, or those whom he commissions, can administer this holy communion. Such has been the rule since the days of the Apostles. I see you are ready to ask, what there is in it which others cannot do ? We know not. But since the object is to bring man into communion with Christ, and one proof that we hold communion with Him is the promise which He has given, —we cannot be assured that we use this ordinance with effect, unless we use it in the very manner which

He has ordained. What the order was, may be best known from what was done by His Apostles ; and they allowed none to minister this sacrament in the Church save those who had received ordination at the hands of bishops."

Here Pamphilus paused, as though he thought he had introduced subjects enough for a single interview. Rutilius was surprised to see for how many hours they had been together ; and excused himself for trespassing so long upon his time. But his host pressed him to renew his visit.

"There is much which interests me in what you have suggested," said the young Roman, at parting ; "and something further I should gladly hear. I have had Christian friends, and would willingly think well of their principles ; but I must tell you that there is a private reason which must prevent me from ever joining your ranks, however I may be brought to approve in general of your conduct."

The other answered : "May your determination, my young friend, be guided by God's grace ; for without it you cannot believe, and with it I will not doubt that you will believe unto salvation."

CHAPTER VIII.

Dialogue with Pamphilus. The Christian Deputy of Tyre.

There was an ancient house not far away,
Renown'd throughout the world for sacred lore
And pure unspotted life: so well, they say,
It govern'd was and guided evermore,
Through wisdom of a matron grave and hore,
Whose only joy was to relieve the needs
Of wretched souls, and help the helpless poor;
All night she spent in bidding of her beads,
And all the day in doin' good and godly deeds.

Faery Queen.

THE next morning, Rutilius was surprised by a visit from Pamphilus. "Are you come," he said, "to know what I think of your arguments yesterday?"

"Not so," said Pamphilus; "I would rather wait before I hear you decide respecting that which as yet you cannot fully understand. But business recalls me to my home at Cæsarea; and I cannot depart without making you acquainted with some one who may satisfy the inquiries which I think that our conversations will suggest."

"Have you friends here, to whom you can introduce me?" said Rutilius.

"No personal friends," answered the other; "but you know that we Christians are all brethren. Besides, our great Master, whom, as I have told

you, we believe to be ever with us, has a deputy in this city, by whom His presence is especially represented."

"How is this?" said the Roman. "I know that the emperor has a deputy in Syria; but I never heard of any other governor in these parts."

Pamphilus. "Know you not that Christ's Church is a kingdom, and that it must therefore have its officers in all lands? True, it is a kingdom not of this world—it does not interfere with worldly power; but a kingdom it is, as certainly as our boasted empire. At present our earthly governor is at Nicomedia, or wherever else he may please to dwell. The Ruler of that spiritual empire, of which we are subjects, is likewise in His capital,—a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The deputies of the one are known by their lictors and their axes;—can you not guess, Rutilius, who are the deputies of the other?"

Rutilius. "I suppose you mean the bishops, without whom, as you told me yesterday, your sacred rites cannot be ministered."

Pamphilus. "Exactly so. In this diocese, Methodius is Christ's deputy, though he owes obedience to Cyril, the bishop of Antioch, who occupies what we call the apostolical see, because thither all bishops of the province go for ordination to their apostolic office."

Rutilius. "And to whom does Cyril owe obedience?"

Pamphilus pointed upward. "Christ has set His holy Apostles or chief bishops 'last of all;' and to Him only do they owe obedience."

"Then there are others like Cyril?" said Rutilius.

"In every province one," said Pamphilus. "There is Theonas at Alexandria for the adjoining country of Egypt; and others in the West, as at Carthage and Rome."

"You mean, then, that Methodius is deputy to the bishop of Antioch," said Rutilius, who felt interested by the laws of this singular kingdom, which had grown up in the heart of the Roman empire.

"Each bishop is the deputy of Christ," answered the Christian, "and represents our Master's immediate presence. This is a primary law of our system, which we have received from the Apostles. The subordination of ranks among bishops is a rule of the Church, which has been introduced by ourselves, for the sake of greater order."

"Does it not lead to disputes among your spiritual princes?" said his young companion.

"It has not yet done so," said the other. "There is no place which has such an undisputed lead, that its bishop is likely to prevail over others. Had Jerusalem continued in its ancient splendour, perhaps it might have been thought to be still the place of our Master's immediate presence, and its bishop might have pretended to be chief.¹ This may have

¹ This sentiment is expressed by St. Jerome.

been one reason why that doomed city was not permitted to remain ; and now, though its bishop is allowed to rank next to Thotecnus, the bishop of Cæsarea, yet it is not the chief even in its own narrow province."

" But there is the capital city ?" said the Roman.

" You naturally think of Rome," said the other ; " and, if we were to judge by a worldly standard, its wealth and power, and the notion which you Romans have so long possessed, that your city was fated to an eternal dominion, would go near to introduce division among us. But it is not thus that we Christians decide. We have already a country and a city, whose builder and maker is God. True, the Church of Rome has great influence in the West : its members are rich and liberal, and its clergy numerous. I was reading lately a letter which was written by Cornelius, who was its bishop about forty years ago. He was writing to Fabius at Antioch, who had the chief authority in those parts, in order to ask his assistance against an innovator named Novatus, who had set up as a rival against him, thus destroying the unity of Christ's kingdom ; and he said, that at that time he had under him, in his several churches at Rome, forty-four priests, seven deacons, as many subdeacons, ninety-four persons in inferior orders, who attended in the various churches ; and above 1500 widows and poor persons, who were sustained by the alms of the congregation."

" What would happen to your empire," asked the

young Roman, with a smile, "if one of these ruling bishops should turn traitor, and set up for himself?"

"The same thing which happens in your worldly empire," said Pamphilus. "Our King has indeed given His deputies authority, but only in subordination to Himself. And the other deputies are charged to interfere, if one should prove disobedient."

Rutilius. "Has it ever happened?"

"Did you never hear of Paul of Samosata?" asked Pamphilus. "I thought you spoke of Antioch as your native place; and he was deposed from its bishopric almost within your recollection."

"I remember to have heard the thing mentioned," said Rutilius, "though it must have happened when I was a child. But tell me one thing more;—might not all your deputies prove rebellious together?"

"This is a case," said Pamphilus, "which our Master has promised shall never happen. That some should prove rebels, we are prepared to expect; and we have holy Scripture in our hands, by which we can at once discern if it should happen. But this will never be the case with all the successors of the Apostles among us; for Christ has promised, that He will be with them always, even to the end of the world."

Rutilius. "Are all your people, then, able to tell what is the right system from your sacred writings? I remember to have been told that Paul of Samosata,

of whom you spoke, had completely led away a great number of simple people from your faith ; and though they had your sacred writings in their hands, they did not know their real meaning. Was it not the case, that there was a great meeting of your people, and that Paul said he was as right, according to the Scriptures, as his opponents ?”

Pamphilus. “ You have heard, I see, of the council of bishops at Antioch. Other persons were present, standing round the bishops, who decided. Paul, as you say, pretended that his explanation of the Scriptures was the true one. But how easily was he answered by Malchion, a learned man living in the diocese, whom the council of bishops called before them, and ordered to state what grounds of complaint were felt by the clergy of the place. He shewed that there could be only one meaning to our sacred writings ; and that one, the meaning which the first generation of bishops received from the Apostles ; and what this meaning was, they expressed in the creed, which we oblige every one to profess when he is baptised. Their other writings shew more fully what they thought. But, for men in general, the creed and the Church-services are a sufficient commentary to enable them to understand our holy Scriptures. And so Paul of Samosata found it : he was deprived of his office, and turned out of our Church. Indeed, he was a sensual, worldly man, whose life was as bad as his teaching. They say that he used all sorts of worldly arts to make himself

highly thought of. He would stamp and strike his thigh when he was preaching, to astonish our simpler brethren. Then he took great pride in the state and pomp of his office. But come with me to Methodius, and you will see a different man."

"Do you know him well?" said Rutilius.

"I pay him respect as Christ's representative in this place," said Pamphilus; "and his habits and character are altogether Christian. Beyond this there is no particular agreement between us; for he has written against my great master Origen, whom I am at this moment preparing to defend against his attacks."

As they moved towards the dwelling of Methodius, Rutilius told his companion that he was not unlikely to be a visitant in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea. A friend of his father's had been appointed deputy of the province, and at his father's desire he had offered to visit his residence. Pamphilus was pleased at the prospect of seeing his young friend again. "As to the place you propose to visit," he said, "if your mind is set on those objects, which even heathen philosophy professes to reverence, you will find little there to give you satisfaction. Even the luxury and license, which prevails in Italy, is surpassed by the excesses of wealthy Romans when they come into these eastern countries; and I have heard the place you speak of described as an example on the small scale of an emperor's court." While he spoke they reached the dwelling of Methodius.

The house was furnished like the dwelling of citizens of a superior class, though with a studied abstinence from every thing gaudy or ostentatious. The chief valuables seemed to be a considerable collection of books, together with some foreign curiosities, which the naval connexions of Tyre gave opportunity for collecting.

"My master is engaged in hearing causes," said the domestic, who shewed them in; "but he will shortly visit you."

"You will like," said Pamphilus, "to see what is the office of a Christian judge;"—and at his desire the servant led them where Methodius was deciding between two parties, who were disputing the inheritance of a relative.¹

"By what authority," asked Rutilius, "does your bishop act?"

"He has no authority," replied his companion, "except the consent of the parties. But we Christians, instead of carrying our complaints before a heathen judge, are accustomed to submit to the arbitration of our own community. And, as I have told you before, our Emperor has his deputy here. Whatever is done in the Church is done by the bishop."

Methodius was at this moment asking the two parties whether they agreed to acquiesce in his decision. "Our Lord," he said, "replied to a person

¹ This account of a bishop's occupation is taken from St. Augustine, *De Opere Monachorum* § 29.

who was not His disciple, 'Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?' and I claim, therefore, no civil power by virtue of that spiritual office which He has given me. For the disciple is not above his Lord. But the great Apostle taught our brethren not to carry their disputes before the heathen, asking them how they could 'set them to judge' who were 'least esteemed in the Church.' It has been our custom, therefore, to agree to act on the Church's decision, which I, as her officer, have to declare. I shall judge, of course, according to the best laws which wise men among the heathen have set forth, taking into account those principles of right which are given us in holy Scripture. Do you both agree to accept my determination?" Both parties promised submission; and Methodius dismissed them, with an assurance that he would inform them of his decision on the following day.

These parties being gone, Pamphilus presented Rutilius as a person anxious to become acquainted with the Christian system. "One part of my office," said Methodius, "you have seen to-day. I am sorry to say that it is an office which occupies much time, which I would gladly reserve for more sacred subjects. But in such a town as this, the questions which are brought before me are numerous; and they require constant reference to that framework of Roman law which supplies the best means of deciding common questions."

"If ever our faith should be adopted by princes,"

said Pamphilus, "and the authority which you now exercise should be publicly recognised, we may expect to see the bishop's court as regular a part in the judicial system of the state as the court of the emperor. But you speak of this as so populous a place;—is not its commercial greatness considerably impaired?"

"Yes, it is," said Methodius; "and it is likely, I think, before long to be altogether lost."

Pamphilus. "On what do you build this expectation?"

Methodius. "As a citizen, I should say that I build it on the peculiar advantages possessed by Alexandria, which for many years has been drawing away our trade. But, as a Christian, I have weightier grounds: I see in what has passed a fulfilment of prophecy, and I anticipate its complete accomplishment."

Rutilius listened with the more attention, because he remembered that Porphyry had noticed to him the existence of Tyre as an argument against the truth of the prophecies of Scripture, by which its desolation had been predicted.

"It is certainly true," said Pamphilus, "that the destruction of Tyre is threatened by Ezekiel; but some have supposed that the ancient city, which stood on the continent, was intended; and undoubtedly it never recovered itself after its destruction by Alexander the Great."

"The prophet's words clearly look further," said Methodius; "and to me the circumstances are the

more interesting, as illustrating the manner in which the prophecies of Scripture are fulfilled. There is first some event of an outward and immediate nature, which stamps, as it were, a character of authenticity on the prediction, and indicates that its fulfilment is at hand. But together with this external, and, it might seem, accidental accordance with the words of Scripture, there is some secret and hidden cause, which is, in reality, more fit to support the weight of the prediction, and which makes itself felt after long years of forgetfulness. Such is the secret of Tyre's decay. The capture and sack of the city by Alexander the Great promised to be a fulfilment of Ezekiel's words. But Tyre recovered from its overthrow. The real cause of its destruction is the rival city, by which the same conqueror cut off the sources of its wealth, and prepared for its distant and irretrievable ruin. Thus it is that God's declarations have their consummation; and so the fall of the great empire of Rome, which the same Daniel predicts, though it may seem to some to be fulfilled, now that Rome has ceased, under our present emperor, to be the real capital of the world, will probably be marked by some more complete accomplishment."

This conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a man who desired to speak with Methodius.

"You see the germ of a great system," said Pamphilus, as their host left them. "Should the Roman empire fall, as Methodius suggests, what would main-

tain those principles of law and order, which it has been the means of introducing among mankind, but the circumstance of their having been thus engrafted upon an institution more permanent than the thrones of the earth?"

Rutilius gave no answer: he had moved to the window to watch what was passing between Methodius and his new applicant. From the poverty of his dress, and the meanness of his situation (for it was obvious that he was a slave), there were probably but few freemen in Tyre who would have conversed with him. But in his bishop this poor man knew that he had a friend. He was stating the cruelty of his master, who had threatened him with the cruel severities of the *ergastulum*, or house of correction, for disobedient slaves, in consequence of his having become a Christian. "And yet," said the poor man, "I have given him no cause for complaint. I have rendered him the more zealous obedience, since I have known that there is a hope for me after this miserable life is over; and since I have had friends, who, bespite my ignorance and penury, are ready to receive me as their equal."

Methodius's answer could not be distinctly heard: but it was obvious that he was suggesting motives for patience and submission; reminding the slave that he was Christ's freed man; and exhorting him rather to submit to his master's injustice, than, by any attempt to escape, to bring a scandal upon the gospel.

"Why do not you seek to buy the freedom of such poor people?" said Rutilius to his companion.

"It is often done," answered Pamphilus; "and our Church is constantly advancing towards the destruction of this oppressive system of slavery. But we should gain too many insincere followers, if we were to employ our Church's funds on the enfranchisement of all who would fly to us for sanctuary; and our early bishop, Ignatius, expressly discountenanced the practice."

"Do you forbid your people to have slaves, then?" said the other. "I thought you had one yourself,—Porphyry, whom I saw with you yesterday; and whom, I suppose, you have named after the great philosopher."

"Do you think, Rutilius, that I should have named him after that enemy of our faith? No; I honour those who are truly the benefactors of mankind—the apostles and martyrs, who have shed their blood to secure to us the knowledge of immortality. Porphyry, I grant, may be a clever man; but what great benefit has he conferred upon his fellows? As to my slave, he was brought up in my family, and had his name from a child. And he is an instance of the manner in which our faith works for the good of men in his situation. He goes with me to our house of prayer; he partakes with me in our holy communion; I exchange the kiss of peace

with him as readily as with the greatest man in our city; I confess him to be of the same blood with myself, to have the same hope, to be in my Master's sight of the same value: and how is it possible that I could treat as a slave him whom I acknowledge as a brother? At present he stays with me willingly; and at my death he will be freed by my will, unless, in these threatening times, he should be called to suffer martyrdom, which I doubt not that he would undergo as readily as I should."

So said Pamphilus, with a sort of anticipation—such as was at that time entertained, not unnaturally, by every Christian—of the probable conclusion of his course. He could scarcely have any more belief than his companion had, that the name of his servant Porphyry was destined to be preserved with his own in the Church's annals, by being blended in the glory of the same martyrdom.¹

The poor slave was now going away, apparently consoled by having met with a kindness and sympathy, for which he might have sought elsewhere in vain through the vast city. Rutilius would gladly have entered into further conversation with Methodius, but a fresh party of poor people came in to solicit the bishop's advice. As he looked round upon

¹ The martyrdom of Pamphilus and his servant Porphyry is recorded by Eusebius in his work on the Martyrs of Palestine, cap. xi.

them, in leaving the house with Pamphilus, he could not help feeling that it was the Christian deputy who understood the true secret of opening a home for the afflicted.

CHAPTER IX.

A Roman Villa. The Deputy of the Emperor. The Midnight Assemblage.

Hence, vain, deluding joys !
The brood of folly, without father bred :
How little you bested
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys !

Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure ;
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train.

Il Penseroso.

A FEW days after the departure of Pamphilus, Rutilius received an invitation to visit his father's friend in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea. His compliance was the more ready, because he felt that it would afford an opportunity for renewing his intercourse with Pamphilus. He had heard much also of Milo's magnificent hospitality ; and was not without curiosity to see what was meant by the fascinating charms of an Asiatic villa.¹ He arrived on the second day after leaving Tyre ; and on his way heard of nothing so much as the sumptuousness of the place which he was about to visit. Not far from the house he

¹ The following description of the mode of life at a Roman villa is borrowed from Petronius's account of Nero.

found a tennis-court, where Milo was at the time amusing himself. The great man was attended by a number of youths, whose long hair reached nearly to their girdles; while at the end of the court stood an attendant with a large silver bowl of water to be ready for his refreshment: Milo would occasionally call him, and dipping his hands in water, dry them on the hair of the attendant pages. The whole place, and the persons who were in waiting, spoke of a softness and effeminacy which disgusted Rutilius, the more when, passing through it to an adjoining door of the house, he saw inscribed on a tablet, which hung on a pillar at the side,—“*Every servant who goes out without his master's permission shall receive a hundred lashes.*”

“Such,” said the young man, “is the marriage of license and of servitude. Thus is oppression the next neighbour to luxury and sloth.” The paintings which covered the walls of the court, which he now entered, were, in like manner, a singular contrast to one another. On one side there were various pictures of heathen gods,—the figure of Milo, the host of the place, being singularly mixed with them; here he was entering Rome in a triumphal car, conducted by Minerva; there Mercury was lifting him up by the chin, and placing him upon a lofty tribunal. Rutilius was at no loss to understand what was meant by the introduction of these patron deities—that Milo's learning was implied to have introduced him to notice in the Capitol, and his eloquence to have

raised him to the judgment-seat. No less significant was the figure of Fortune, which stood by him on one side with a cornucopia, to express the abundance of his wealth; while on the other were the three Fates, spinning a golden thread, as an emblem of his good fortune. But there were other circumstances of a personal nature depicted; his being taught to reckon; his being appointed treasurer: and as the artist who had executed the designs was less remarkable for his skill than his flattery, their meaning was obligingly explained by suitable inscriptions. •

Rutilius was not less amused by all this parade in praise of a person, who, he knew, had no claims to distinction, except from the accidents of birth and fortune, than by the puerile device which he saw joined to it: the figure of a great dog, painted close by the corner of the porter's lodge, and surmounted by an inscription, in great letters,—“TAKE CARE OF THE DOG.” The animal was drawn naturally enough; and as it was so placed that on entering you came upon it on a sudden, the servant who carried Rutilius's effects, and who was looking in another direction when he approached, was so scared, that he nearly broke his neck in starting out of the way. All this was laughable enough; but it was painfully contrasted with the opposite side of the court, on which might be seen the picture of a slave-market. There the native Syrian or Paphlagonian thrall; the Scythian or Goth captured in war, and carried into a distant captivity,—contrasted with the peculiar features of the

negro; while round the neck of each were labels indicating their prices. Rutilius's own feelings revolted at this contrast between his host's overgorged prosperity, and the misery of so many of his fellow-creatures; and the spectacle reminded him of what he had heard from Pamphilus—that all men were in truth brethren; that slavery was a state which, instead of being paraded as an accession to the splendour of the few, ought to be deplored as a fearful consequence of the degradation of the many; and that the extension of the Christian faith would lead to its total abolition.

It was just supper-time; and Rutilius, after he had bathed, entered the principal apartment; a lad, whose office it was, calling out as he crossed the threshold,—“Your right foot forwards;” lest he should enter in an unlucky manner. The feast which followed partook of the overwrought luxury of the period. Not only was there such profuse abundance as to pall upon the most unrestrained appetite, but every device was adopted to prolong the pleasure of the feast, and provoke the languid palate.

Rutilius could not help feeling how much the habits of the age had degenerated from that simple elegance which breathed through the drinking-song of Horace :

“ I hate the Persian banquet's pride :
Boy, fling those gaudy wreaths aside,
No linden knot for me

Nor seek in what lone dell the rose,
The last of summer, ling'ring blows—
It fits nor me nor thee.

Add not a leaf—'tis my command—
Well suits thy brow the myrtle band;
And well its simple braid
Becomes thy master; where the vine
Delights a leafy screen to twine,
Carousing in the shade.”¹

This feeling was not abated, when, after various other dishes had been brought up and dismissed, he saw a boar of vast size placed upon the table. It had an appropriate carver, in a man dressed like a hunter; but no sooner had he struck his wood-knife into it, than out started a number of blackbirds, which were caught by fowlers who stood around with their reeds, and presented afterwards to the different guests. Various interludes of the same sort occurred; and during the intervals their host plied the company with Falernian wine. The bottles were plastered over, and labelled—“*Falernian, a hundred years old.*”

On seeing the inscription, Milo cried out, “Alas, that wine should endure longer than those who drink it. But since so it is, let us drink while we may.” While he was speaking, a servant brought in a silver skeleton, so ingeniously constructed that it would turn every way. A person who lay on the couch

¹ From the translation of Horace's Lyrics by Archdeacon Wrangham.

near Rutilius whispered to him some lines of Lucretius,

"So when the jolly blades with garlands crowned
Sit down to drink, while frequent healths go round,
Some looking grave, this observation make,
All the delights are short we men can take."

CREECH'S *Lucretius*.

But with Milo none of these things were valuable, except as they ministered to his personal gratification. He had no perception of the meaning of this custom, which his countrymen had borrowed from the ancient Egyptians, nor any taste for the classical application which had been made of it by the Roman poets. When he had satisfied his appetite, he could speak only about his wealth and consequence, and began to tell his guests what he purposed to do with all his riches. An inventory of his estates and slaves was read: then he ordered his will to be brought, and stated what kind of monument he thought of erecting. "There shall be a sun-dial in the midst of it," he said, "that nobody may be able to tell what o'clock it is without reading my name. However," he added, "there is time enough to see about this, for my diviner tells me I may reckon for certain on thirty years more." While he was talking, a boy happened to drop a cup; "You are growing careless," said Milo, turning to him; "go out directly, and kill yourself."

Rutilius, who knew what absolute power over the life of his slaves was possessed by this vain and

sensual man, was afraid that the sentence would be carried into effect ; but perhaps it was only threatened, that Milo might yield to the intercession, which was immediately made to him by the surrounding guests.

When the feast had in this manner been prolonged much beyond midnight, the sudden entrance of a body of fresh visitors gave Rutilius an opportunity of slipping out of the hall ; but as the drunken uproar which still filled the castle made rest at present hopeless, he sought for quiet in some neighbouring ruins, which he had observed as he entered in the evening. Turning immediately after he left the gate, he skirted the high wall of Milo's residence ; and a few minutes brought him to what had evidently been the remains of some very extensive building. Herod the Great he knew had raised vast works in this neighbourhood ; and these ruins seemed, from their style, to belong to that period. A narrow valley conducted to them from the opposite side, while behind they abutted upon the grounds of Milo, which, rising considerably higher, enabled Rutilius without much difficulty to reach their summit. There was no moon ; but the bright starlight enabled him to see into some vast halls which lay without roof below, divided only by crumbling walls ; and the luxuriant growth of flowers and shrubs, which covered them so thick that the night-breeze could not shake off the dew, testified to their utter desertion. Once, no doubt these mansions had resounded to the

same mad cries which were still occasionally to be heard from the dwelling of Milo. Now luxury and pride had done their work. The sated Epicurean had ceased from his enjoyments. Nothing but the lurking jackal tenanted these lordly chambers. Rutilius sat down on an eminence to enjoy the beauty of the scene, and felt how much more attractive are sober and serious thoughts, even though they may be tinged with melancholy, than that crackling of thorns in which fools delight.

While these reflexions were passing through his mind, and he was wondering how it was that his countrymen could find any thing to please them in the gross and sordid sensuality which he had this evening witnessed, his attention was suddenly caught by the passage of many persons along the valley which conducted towards the ruins. They evidently seemed to be approaching the building from a side opposite to that from which he had reached it. He recollected what he had heard of the secret orgies of the Syrian priests, commonly carried on in secluded woods and caverns, where abominations which the censors had capitally punished at Rome were known to be still perpetrated. Such were the rites of Venus, by which a large number of priests and priestesses were supported in a dark grove near the city of Aphaca, a little to the northward. Not doubting that he should witness something of the same sort, Rutilius crept silently along a wall which led towards the opposite part of the building. Remem-

bering the two Acarnanians who were torn to pieces by the mob at Athens, as Livy relates, for intruding upon the mysteries of Ceres, he felt that it would be in the utmost degree dangerous to be discovered; but though he expected to see nothing but some still more disgusting spectacle than that which he had lately witnessed, yet he could not resist the curiosity he felt to know the worst of those abominations, amongst which he was living.

Thus actuated, he gained a window which was nearly stopped up, and which seemed to lead into the place to which he had seen persons coming. It looked into an extensive chamber, which, though standing in the midst of the ruins, had been more substantially built than the rest; for a large portion of the roof was entire, and the walls and doorways were uninjured. Entering by this window, Rutilius found himself upon a narrow ledge, which terminated in a small recess in the wall, about twenty feet from the floor of the apartment. At the very moment of his reaching it, two men appeared, each bearing a light, which they placed on a great stone slab at one end. They were followed by a large body of persons, consisting, as he expected, of both sexes. For a few moments after their entrance they seemed to be crouching on the ground in ranks opposite to each other, the men on one side, the women on the other. He imagined that they must be preparing for some bacchanalian scene; and concealing himself, so as not to be visible, he tried to discover what sacrifice they were designing, and

who were the ministering priests. But he could discern nothing ; and the walls were not ornamented, as was usual in heathen temples, either with pictures or statues. The only decoration consisted of chaplets of flowers, and of a few leafy boughs of trees, which were tastefully arranged round the pillars of the building. While he was making his observations, both parties rose up at once, and, without moving from their places, began, in a distinct tone and in alternate portions, to sing the following words :¹

“ Men. O God, Thou art my God ; early will I seek Thee.

Women. My soul thirsteth for Thee ; my flesh also longeth after Thee in a barren and dry land, where no water is.

M. Thus have I looked for Thee in holiness, that I might behold Thy power and glory.

W. For Thy loving-kindness is better than the life itself, my lips shall praise Thee.

M. As long as I live will I magnify Thee in this manner, and lift up my hands in Thy name.

W. My soul shall be satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness, when my mouth praiseth Thee with joyful lips.

M. Have I not remembered Thee on my bed, and thought upon Thee when I was waking ?

W. Because Thou hast been my helper, therefore under the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.

¹ For the use of this Psalm, and for what follows, vide Bingham's Antiquities, book xiii.

M. My soul hangeth upon Thee : Thy right hand hath upholden me.

W. Those also that seek the hurt of my soul, they shall go under the earth.

M. Let them fall upon the edge of the sword, that they may be a portion for foxes.

W. But the king shall rejoice in God ; all they also that swear by Him shall be commended : but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped."

The words ceased, but not their effect upon the mind of Rutilius. He was sufficiently acquainted with the language of the Christians to feel assured that it must be one of their assemblies, of which he was so unexpectedly the observer. And it was for this that they separated themselves from the license and festivity of the heathen world, that they might retire into recesses where no eye but their Master's was privy to their deeds, and there, in these solemn, ennobling strains, hold intercourse with those realities, with a view to which they only of mankind seemed to be living. What a contrast were these sounds to the senseless uproar of Milo's guests, of which some faint echo might still be heard, as they staggered forth from their scene of revelry ! Here were men abridging their bodily rest, that the cravings of their immortal nature might be the better satisfied ;—there the sensual being so prevailed over the spiritual, that men seemed degraded to a lower level than the beasts. To which party should he attach himself ? Which was most conge-

nial to his nobler feelings? Rutilius had heard much before which had diminished his prejudices against the Christians; but nothing had won upon his heart so much as the contrast between self-indulgence and self-restraint,—between heathen excess and Christian mortification,—which this night had brought before him.

But the singing began again. Words of the same nature with those which he had heard were chanted at intervals, sometimes by the whole assembly together, sometimes, as at first, by the men and women alternately. There were occasional intervals, during which all stood in silence; and from their manner Rutilius inferred that, as when he had at first become a witness of their conduct, they were engaged in secret prayer.

At length, after an interval of this sort, a man of grave appearance ascended a raised seat, which stood near the centre of the building, but somewhat further from that side where the lights¹ were placed, so that it did not seem easy for him to read, as he proceeded to do, from a large roll, which he carried in his hands. The people now sat in silence, except that when he

¹ The custom of having lights upon the altar is first mentioned, so far as the Western Church is concerned, by Paulinus of Nola, in the fifth century, *Nat. 3. S. Felicis*; but it is to be expected that the analogy of the Jewish worship would introduce them sooner in Palestine. The lighting of candles at the reading of the gospel is mentioned by St. Jerome as characteristic of the Eastern Church,—*contra Vigil* § 3.

began by saying, "Peace be with you," they answered, with one consent, "And with thy spirit." He then proclaimed, with a loud voice, "Thus saith the Lord;" on which a person, who seemed to be in attendance upon him, replied in like manner, "Let us give attention." From these words Rutilius supposed that the book which he heard was some part of the Christian sacred writings; and from the allusions which it contained to the Jewish people, he referred it to the Old Testament. This was shortly followed by the reading of a second portion, at the commencement of which many lamps were lighted throughout the assembly, and the whole body of people rose up and stood. This passage related to the history of our Lord; and it was followed by a third, which commenced with the words, "I will that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." Rutilius's attention was particularly drawn to these expressions by a reverend person, whose manner evidently pointed him out as chief man in the assembly. Ascending a raised step, in front of the large stone table, on which lights had from the first been burning, after having saluted the people much in the same manner as he who read the lesson, he spoke thus, respecting the force and application of these words.

"In this epistle," he said, "St. Paul has taught us in what manner we should begin our public prayers. You know to whom he spoke. He wrote thus to Timothy, because on him, as bishop of Ephe-

sus, devolved the duty of setting forth public prayer. In like manner, I, my brethren, who speak in this place as Christ's apostle, have followed the order which my predecessors have left me in the ordering of your public devotions. First, we have the prayers for those who are not yet received into the Church. Then come prayers for those whom Satan vexes, or who have fallen into sin. These three orders,—our catechumens, those who are afflicted by visitations of Satan, and the penitents,—are first prayed for, because they are compelled to depart before the faithful draw near to the sacred mysteries. These things ended, come those most holy rites, which such of you as have taken your part in Christ's mystic body understand. And here it is that the injunctions of holy Paul are literally obeyed. We pray for all our rulers, whom God has raised up to bear sway on the earth; for mankind at large; but most for Christ's whole flock, and for those who partake in His holy sacraments. And these prayers we offer when our Lord Himself is mystically lying upon the altar,—when we come, therefore, with most assurance that our prayers shall, through Christ, be accepted, and that we have a right to draw near as members of His body.

“ Consider for whom we pray—for Christ's whole flock; not merely for those who are still militant among us, but for all who are at rest, because they have departed in His faith and fear. What manner of blessings they may be capable of, we know not, or

how they may profit by our prayers; but as we have been taught to supplicate for Christ's whole body, whether here or elsewhere, therefore we make them partakers of our intercession. And, in like manner, we pray for all the heathen world: we entreat for its conversion. We pray for our persecutors; for those who never pray for themselves; for those who are ignorant of their wants.

“And here let me shew you, my brethren, one chief object of our meeting, as we this night do, with solemn prayer and fasting, to supplicate for the heathen world. You know who hath said, ‘Ye are the light of the world.’ And again it is spoken, ‘We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.’ And you know what wickedness fills the earth. You know how lust, rapine, and cruelty prevail; how men are sunk in selfishness. You know that the sins of the heathen are not merely committed through the overpowering strength of temptation, but are commanded by their superstition, and sanctioned by their laws. This is the universal picture—‘the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.’ Now by what means can we do our Master's work in so wayward a generation? Will common efforts prevail? Will common exhortations reform them? No; they need some stronger impulse. If we would be the means through which God's grace may find occasion to work in them, we must offer up ourselves a willing sacrifice, that so our example may be a warning which may strike

conviction to their careless souls. We must shew them that we possess a secret more attractive than riot or lust, and able to exercise a stronger influence over the heart of man than even the common wants of his nature. This is your task, ye holy virgins, who, unbound by any outward constraint, give yourselves up daily afresh to your heavenly Bridegroom. In other days, you might perhaps not think yourselves called upon to consecrate yourselves so immediately to the altar. But in the midst of this heathen world, when all men are bent professedly on their own pleasure, how could you so clearly testify that there is something real besides that which men behold, and that in it is the true purpose of our being? This it is which your devotion testifies,—a devotion which, being more entire than that of others, is more acceptable to Him who reads the heart. Therefore it is that over your place in this assembly¹ you have the inscription written: ‘There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit.’ See only that you be not proud of this distinction, lest, being puffed up, you fall into Satan’s snare.

“The same may I say, in general, of our ascetics. Their self-denial is more needful in this our age, that the salt may not lose its savour. The heathen

¹ This circumstance is mentioned by St. Ambrose,—*ad Virgin. Laps.*

require the efficacy of a great example. They need to be taught, by your conduct, how vain are those objects which besot their sensual minds. Therefore against their days of mirth we set our nights of devotion,—our fasts against their festivals,—our patience against their oppression,—our solitary life against their licentiousness,—that they may understand what can be done by men in whom Christ dwells by His Spirit, and what is the purity of that freedom which was purchased by the sacrifice of His blood.”

After this address, which Rutilius heard with the more interest, because it so corresponded with his own train of thought, proclamation was made aloud by the same person who had previously been in attendance on the reader, “Let no hearer, let no unbeliever be present;” and immediately afterwards, “Pray, ye catechumens; and let all the faithful pray with them earnestly, saying, The Lord have mercy upon them.” Rutilius felt that this command was intended to exclude him; and he drew back as far as the recess which he had entered would allow him: but it was impossible for him to escape without passing in front of the whole body of worshippers, and he was compelled therefore to remain, in a position in which he could not but hear and see what was passing. After the departure of the catechumens and some others, he heard a similar proclamation respecting penitents; and after a prayer offered in their behalf, the following words were pronounced by the same person who had preached the sermon:—

“ O Almighty and Eternal God,¹ the Lord of the whole world, the Maker and Governor of all things, who hast made man to be an ornament of the world, through Christ, and hast given him both a natural and a written law, that he might live by the rules thereof, as a reasonable creature; that hath also, when he had sinned, given him a motive and encouragement to repent, even Thy own goodness; look down upon these men, who bow their souls and bodies unto Thee: for Thou desirest not the death of a sinner, but that he should repent, and turn from his evil way, and live. Thou that acceptedst the repentance of the Ninevites; that wouldst have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth; that receivedst again the prodigal son, who had spent his substance in riotous living, with the compassionate bowels of a father, because of his repentance, — accept now the repentance of these Thy suppliants; for there is no man that sinneth not against Thee. If Thou, Lord, wilt mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? for there is mercy and propitiation with Thee. Restore them to Thy holy Church in their former dignity and honour, through Christ our Lord and Saviour, by whom be glory and adoration unto Thee, in the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.”

This prayer concluded,² it seemed that those de-

¹ From the Apostolical Constitutions.

² In what follows, besides the Apostolical Constitutions, and other original authorities, Bingham's *Antiquities*, b. xiii. xiv.

parted who were not permitted to join in the full worship of the Church; and the service proceeded, conducted principally by the chief minister or bishop, as Rutilius rightly deemed him to be, and the attendants or deacons.

Bishop. I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass Thine altar.

Deacon. Let none who may not partake in this service remain.

Let none have aught against any one.

Salute one another with an holy kiss."

Here those who were adjoining saluted one another, the men the men, the women the women. Rutilius thought he saw a reason why the places of men and women were distinct.

Bishop. The peace of God be with you all.

People. And with thy spirit.

Deacon. Let us present our offerings to the Lord with reverence and godly fear."

After an interval, during which persons seemed to approach that part of the building where the bishop was standing, apparently bringing something as offerings, he proceeded :

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the peace of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

People. And with thy spirit.

Bishop. Lift up your hearts.

and xv., and Bishop Rattray's version of the Liturgy of the Ancient Church of Jerusalem, have been principally employed.

People. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Bishop. Let us give thanks unto the Lord God.

People. It is meet and right so to do.

Bishop. It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty everlasting God. Therefore with angels and arch-angels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy holy name, evermore praising Thee, and saying—

Bishop and People. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.

Bishop. Holy art Thou, O eternal King, and the Giver of all holiness; holy is Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom Thou madest the world; holy also is Thy Holy Spirit, who searcheth all things, even the depths of Thee, O God; holy art Thou, who rulest over all, almighty and good God—terrible, yet full of compassion, but especially indulgent to the workmanship of Thy own hands; for Thou didst make man, formed out of the earth, after Thy own image, and graciously gavest him the enjoyment of Paradise. And when he had lost his happiness by transgressing Thy commandment, Thou of Thy goodness didst not despise or abandon him, but didst discipline him as a merciful Father, and train him up by the tuition of the law and the prophets; and, last of all, Thou didst send Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,

into the world, that by His coming He might renew Thy image in us ; who descended from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, conversed with mankind, and directed His whole dispensation to our salvation. And when the hour was come, that He who had no sin was to suffer a voluntary and life-giving death upon the cross for us sinners, in the same night that He was betrayed, or rather offered up Himself for the life and salvation of the world, taking bread into His holy and spotless hands [*taking the paten in his hand*], looking up to heaven, and presenting it to Thee, His God and Father, He gave thanks, sanctified and brake it [*breaking the bread*], and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat ; *this is My body* [*laying his hands upon the bread*], which is broken and given for you, for the remission of sins.

In like manner, after supper, He took the cup [*taking the cup into his hands*] ; and having mixed it of wine and water, He gave thanks, sanctified and blessed it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Drink ye all of this : *this is My blood* [*laying his hands on the vessel of wine*] of the new testament, which is shed and given for you and for many, for the remission of sins : do this in remembrance of Me.

Wherefore, in commemoration of His life-giving passion, salutary cross, death, burial, and resurrection from the dead on the third day, His ascension into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of Thee,

His God and Father, and looking for His second glorious and terrible advent, when He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead, and shall render to every one according to his works, —we sinners offer to Thee, O Lord, this awful and bloodless sacrifice, beseeching Thee, that Thou wouldst not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us after our iniquities; but, according to Thy clemency and ineffable love to mankind, overlooking and blotting out the handwriting that is against Thy servants, wouldest grant us Thy heavenly and eternal good things; for Thy people and Thine inheritance make their supplications unto Thee. Have mercy upon us, O Lord God almighty Father, have mercy upon us, according to Thy great mercy; and send down Thy Holy Spirit upon us all, and upon these gifts which are here set before Thee, that by His descent upon them, He may make this bread [*laying his hands upon the bread*] the holy BODY of Thy Christ, and this cup [*laying his hands upon the vessel of wine*] the precious BLOOD of Thy Christ; that they may be, to all who partake of them, for the sanctification of soul and body, for bringing forth the fruit of good works, for remission of sins, and for life everlasting.

We offer to Thee, O Lord, for Thy Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church throughout the whole world; do Thou now also plentifully furnish her with the rich gifts of Thy Spirit. Look down upon her in her captivity; O visit her once more with Thy

salvation, and bring her out to serve Thee in the beauty of holiness.

Remember, O Lord, the holy bishops in Thy Church, especially me, Thine unworthy servant; endow them with wisdom, and fill them with the Holy Ghost, that they may rightly divide, and uprightly walk in the word of truth.

Remember, O Lord, according to the multitude of Thy mercies and compassions, all the priests and deacons who compass Thy holy altar; grant to them an unblameable priesthood, and preserve them unspotted in their ministry.

Remember, O Lord, all kings and princes whom Thou hast appointed to reign upon the earth, and especially Thy servants our emperors, Dioclesian and Maximin, with the Cæsars; establish their kingdoms in peace, and incline their hearts to be favourable to Thy Church, that in their tranquillity we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

Remember, O Lord, this diocese, and every city and country, with all the faithful that dwell in them; preserve them in peace and safety.

Remember, O Lord, our Christian brethren that travel by sea or land, or are in foreign countries, that are in chains or imprisonment, that are in captivity or banishment, in the mines, or in hard slavery.

Remember, O Lord, those that are sick and diseased, or afflicted by evil spirits, and make haste to heal and deliver them.

Remember, O Lord, every Christian soul under affliction and calamity, and all who stand in need of Thy divine mercy and help.

Remember also the conversion of them that be in error.

Remember all, O Lord, for good ; have mercy upon all, O Lord ; be reconciled to us all ; settle the flocks of Thy people in peace ; remove all scandals ; make wars to cease ; put a stop to the violence of heresies ; heal the schisms of the Churches ; and grant us Thy peace and love, O God our Saviour, and the hope of all the ends of the earth.

Remember, O Lord, to grant us temperate weather, moderate showers, pleasant dews, and plenty of the fruits of the earth ; and to bless the whole circle of the year with Thy goodness ; for the eyes of all hope in Thee, and Thou givest them food in due season ; Thou openest Thine hand, and fillest every living creature with Thy gracious bounty.

Remember, O Lord, all who bring forth fruit and do good works in Thy holy Churches, and who are mindful of the poor, the widows, the orphans, strangers, and indigent persons, and all who desire to be remembered in our prayers.

Vouchsafe also, O Lord, to remember those who have this day offered their oblations at Thy holy altar, and those for whom every one has offered.

And grant that we may all find mercy and favour with all Thy saints, who from the beginning of the world have pleased Thee in their several genera-

tions; patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and every just spirit made perfect in the faith of Thy Christ.

Remember, O Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, those whom we have remembered, and those whom we have not remembered, from righteous Abel even unto this day; do Thou give them rest in the regions of the living, in the bosoms of our holy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, where sorrow, grief, and lamentation, are banished away—where the light of Thy countenance visits and shines continually; and vouchsafe to bring them and us to the full enjoyment of Thy heavenly kingdom; and dispose the end of our lives in peace, that they may be Christian, well-pleasing to Thee, and free from sin, through Thy only-begotten Son, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ; for He alone appeared without spot upon the earth; through whom and with whom Thou art blessed and glorified, together with Thy Holy Spirit, now and ever, world without end.

People. Amen.

Bishop and People. Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Bishop (turning to the people). Peace be with you all.

People. And with thy spirit.

Deacon. Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Bishop (turning to the altar). We Thy servants, O Lord, bow down our necks to Thee, before Thy holy altar, in expectation of Thy rich mercies. Send down upon us, O Lord, Thine abundant grace and benediction; and sanctify our souls and bodies, that we may be made worthy to be communicants and partakers of Thy holy mysteries, for the remission of our sins, and for life everlasting; for to Thee our God belong adoration and glory, and to Thy only-begotten Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

Bishop. Grace be with you all.

People. And with thy spirit.

Deacon. Let us attend in the fear of God.

Bishop. Holy things for holy persons.

People. There is one holy, one Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father; to whom be glory for ever."

Then the bishop knelt before the altar, and, with the reverent manner of one who was handling holy things, eat and drank of the bread and wine which he had consecrated. Then rising, he gave in like manner to him who had read the Scriptures, and to the deacons, saying with a low voice to each as he delivered the bread,

"The body of Christ;"

and as he delivered the cup,

"The blood of Christ;"

which words he had also used when he himself received. And the person receiving answered on each occasion, "Amen."

As soon as these persons had received, they arose, and in like manner gave the bread and wine to each of the congregation, both men and women, who drew near in order and knelt near the altar. Those who administered seemed to speak to each person the same words as had been pronounced towards themselves; but they spoke in such a suppressed tone as to be scarcely audible, though the "Amen" of the receiver could be distinctly heard. Meanwhile those who were not receiving sung the following words with a low voice:

"I will always give thanks unto the Lord; His praise shall ever be in my mouth."

My soul shall make her boast of the Lord; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

O praise the Lord with me, and let us magnify His name together.

I sought the Lord, and He heard me; yea, He delivered me out of all my fear.

They had an eye unto Him, and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed.

Lo, the poor crieth, and the Lord heareth him; yea, and saveth him out of all his troubles.

The angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.

O taste and see how gracious the Lord is; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

The lions do lack and suffer hunger ; but they who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.

Come, ye children, and hearken unto me : I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

What man is he that lusteth to live, and would fain see good days ?

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile.

Eschew evil, and do good ; seek peace, and ensue it.

The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers.

The countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil, to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of a humble spirit.

Great are the troubles of the righteous ; but the Lord delivereth him out of all.

He keepeth all his bones ; so that not one of them is broken.

But misfortune shall slay the ungodly ; and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

The Lord delivereth the souls of His servants ; and all they that put their trust in Him shall not be destitute."

When all had received a part of the consecrated bread and wine, the deacons, kneeling down, placed what remained upon the altar, and covered it up. Then one of them, turning to the people, said,

“ Let us give thanks to God, that He hath vouchsafed to make us partakers of the Body and Blood of Christ, for remission of sins, and for life everlasting. And let us pray to Him that He would keep us unblameable, as He is good, and a lover of men.”

Bishop (turning towards the altar). “ O God, who of Thy great and inexpressible love to man dost condescend to the weakness of Thy servants ; we give thanks to Thee, that Thou hast vouchsafed to make us partakers of this heavenly table : let not the receiving of Thy unspotted mysteries be to the condemnation of us sinners ; but keep us, good God, in the sanctification of Thy Holy Spirit, that being made holy, we may obtain a part and inheritance with all Thy saints who have pleased Thee from the beginning of the world ; through the mercies of Thy only-begotten Son, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ, with whom and Thy Holy Spirit, Thou art blessed, now and for ever, world without end. Amen.”

The bishop and people then sung, —

“ Glory be to God in the highest,

And on earth peace,

Good will towards men.

We praise Thee,

We bless Thee,
We worship Thee,
We glorify Thee,
We give thanks to Thee,
For Thy great glory,
O Lord,
Heavenly King,
God the Father Almighty,
O Lord, the only-begotten Son,
Jesus Christ,
And Holy Ghost :
O Lord God,
Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
Who takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy upon us :
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
Receive our prayers ;
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the
Father,
Have mercy upon us.
For Thou only art holy ;
Thou only art the Lord,
Jesus Christ,
To the glory of God the Father.
Bishop (turning to the people). O God, great
and wonderful, look upon Thy servants, who bow
down their necks unto Thee ; stretch forth Thy
powerful hand, full of blessings, and bless Thy
people. Preserve Thine inheritance, that we may

continually glorify Thee for ever, the only living and true God: for to Thee, O Father, belongs glory, honour, adoration, and thanksgiving, and to Thy Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever.

People. Amen.

Deacon (after a short pause). Depart in peace."

After these words, the whole assembly rose up, and in silence, like men who felt that they were still in the presence of some mysterious power, they departed as rapidly as they had assembled together. When the people were gone, the deacons took charge of what remained of the consecrated bread and wine, one of them having first shewn the bishop a list of the sick persons to whom they were to dispense them. This done, they too departed; and Rutilius came forth from his hiding-place, with a mingled feeling of satisfaction and uneasiness,—uneasiness at the thought, that he had intruded where he ought not, and had perhaps incurred guilt without designing it; yet satisfaction at receiving this accidental confutation of the charges still prevalent against the Christians. "There is nothing, at all events," he said to himself, "of that impiety which has been asserted to exist in their secret meetings. If I do not perceive the meaning or significance of all which they have done, yet the seriousness and reverence of their manner shews that they themselves feel its reality; and what a contrast is it to the gross and debasing pleasures which occupy the majority of mankind!"

But besides these general grounds of interest, Rutilius's attention had been powerfully awakened by a circumstance of a personal nature. What that circumstance was will be seen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

Visit to Pamphilus. The due Use of Antiquity. The Jewish Convert.

There the new-born river lies,
Outspread beneath its native skies,
As if it there would love to dwell
Alone and unapproachable ;
Soon flowing forward, and resign'd
To the will of the creating Mind,
It springs at once with sudden leap
Down from the immeasurable steep.

SOUTHEY.

THE light was already beginning to dawn in the east, when Rutilius crept forth through the same opening by which he had entered the church of the Christians. He retraced his steps along the tottering wall which divided the ruins ; and hastened to regain Milo's house before the advancing day should discover how he had been employed. A few slaves were issuing forth for their morning labour as he entered the porter's lodge, and, casting a glance at the picture of the great dog, which was just discernible, hurried up to his room. The excitement and fatigue of the scenes through which he had passed began now to take effect upon him ; but youth and a robust frame were on his side ; and when, with a throbbing head, he hastily threw him-

self upon his bed, he was asleep in a moment. Still, however, did the events of the preceding day continue to chase one another through his memory. First, he dreamt that he was in Milo's hall;—there were the numerous lamps, the noisy guests, the loaded tables—at the head of the feast the host himself, bent solely on display and self-indulgence, striving how he could stimulate his jaded appetite, and find some new refinement of luxurious sensuality. The whole place seemed filled with what ministered to the grossness of appetite, while the sycophants and debauchees around were imitating the example and applauding the conduct of their chief. Women too were there, only more disgusting than the men, because their shameless depravity bespoke the degeneracy and ruin of a purer nature.

On a sudden all was changed. The chief figure in the hall was a reverend old man, of meek and self-denying demeanour, whose calmness, the result of habitual indifference to the things of earth, was blended with a lofty but almost enthusiastic ardour, the consequence of an habitual intercourse with things unseen. All in him and around spoke the manner of one disengaged from this world. Rutilius felt that he was in the presence of the Christian bishop. About him stood men whose deep seriousness was produced not by a harsh and unkindly temper towards mankind, but by the conviction that to them was entrusted a secret of which the majority of men were ignorant. There, too, he saw

women ; but oh, how different from the degenerate objects whose place they occupied ! Pure, holy, refined, ready apparently to step forth for the relief of suffering, but conscious of their own dignity, and that reserve and self-restraint were the true ornaments of their nature. And among them knelt one from whom he found it impossible to withdraw his eyes. She belonged evidently to the class of unmarried persons, for she did not wear the veil which was used by matrons. But she had not the peculiar dress which denoted those who had devoted themselves to the especial service of the Church, and were therefore formed into the class of widows and virgins. Yet so closely was she wrapped up, that no eye but his could have singled her out of the multitude. Could it indeed be Flavia ? What could have brought her from Egypt, where some weeks ago he had heard of her safe arrival ? How came she not to be yet wedded to Marcellus ?

Rutilius's first thought at waking was, that he had overslept his usual hour of rising, and been harassed by tumultuous dreams. But the court of Milo's house and the distant ruins, which his window overlooked, brought back all the scenes of the preceding night to his mind. He arose ; and after bidding Milo a hasty farewell, he set forth to seek out Pamphilus in the adjoining town of Cæsaræa. His host, who was not wanting in the duties of hospitality, would willingly have detained him ; but he had seen enough to disgust him in the revels of the

preceding night, even if the hope of hearing something respecting Flavia had not added to his desire to depart.

As he rode out of the courtyard, the gates of the magnificent hall, flanked by its lofty columns, stood open on one side, and on the other a sort of dingy prison-house, where some slaves, of abject appearance, were engaged in labour. This close approximation of pomp and misery brought to his recollection the liberty and simple dignity which he had seen in the house of the Christian ruler at Tyre. What a rebuke was it to the self-indulgence of his countrymen!

“And is this,” he said to himself, “the object for which men seek to grow rich and powerful?—That they may live in this insipid round of pleasures, seeking continually to find fresh objects to solicit their senses; while all the higher sources of satisfaction—a mind at peace with itself, love, purity, confidence, self-command—are lost sight of and forgotten! How much better are the rules which even philosophy points out obeyed by those despised Nazaræans! And is not some such law as theirs wanted to raise the mass of mankind from their present degradation? What have our philosophers done for the poor during the 500 years that their teaching has been popular with men of education? They still continue slaves: they cannot even expect to take part in an improvement, which, if it is ever introduced, will require long study and much leisure

in every one who is to profit by it. This the mass of mankind can never bestow; and since weak and sensual men, like Milo, will always take their character from what is popular, I see not how either rich or poor are to be improved, except by something which will give all men greater dignity and self-respect. This is certainly done by the system of the Christians: the opinion that every one possesses an immortal soul, for which he must give account hereafter, which Plato could never induce the generality to believe, is by them universally admitted; and their doctrine of the resurrection of men's bodies enables the vulgar to enter more completely into its meaning. Then their union into one Church gives them such a close interest in each other, that their baptism is like the introduction of a new principle of life into the world.

He was so full of these thoughts, that he could not refrain from expressing them to two travellers with whom he fell in on the road; one of them having been a guest the day before at Milo's house. He was of middle age, and in manner and expression shewed considerable excitement; while his companion was a younger man, of a grave and studious appearance. The former warmly responded to his words. "What luxury," he said "and coarseness was there in our entertainment yesterday! Yet what can you expect, when the vices of the people are but a copy of those extravagances which the popular voice attributes to their gods. How genuine

is the sentiment which Terence puts into the young man's mouth, ' Shall I, a weak mortal, be expected to overcome a temptation which Jupiter, the great god of the sky, was unable to resist ? ' "

Rutilius felt the justice of the sentiment, and asked whether his companion was a philosopher.

" No," he replied ; " I belong to a family which is not held together, like your philosophic schools, by the mere community of opinion, but which has a closer bond of concord."

" Am I to understand that you are a Christian ? " broke out the young student, whose name proved to be Eusebius ; " for I believe it to be one of their main distinctions that they are not merely connected, like the followers of the heathen sages, by the opinions they profess, but by their solemn introduction into one body."

" Young man," said the other, " I belong to no such despised party. I belong to the exalted heaven-worshippers, of whom you may perhaps have heard, who extract the kernel both from the Jewish and heathen systems."

" I have heard of you," said Eusebius ; " you have a leader, whom you call your chief, and a sort of baptism at your admission. But tell me, what progress do you make in the improvement of the world ? Can you give the signs which we do, either that your system proceeds from God, or that it is adapted to man's benefit ? By what authority does your chief receive you by baptism ? Is it not his

own? And what proof have you that any benefit will attend it? Whereas for our baptism we have the authority of its divine Founder; and the experience of the world shews that, in the long-run, a real benefit follows from its application. Depend on it, your system is but a faint resemblance of that which God has established among us; a proof that men feel the need of some such society as our Church affords, yet know not where to find it. You are like the daughters of Pelias, who, when they saw that Medæa could give new life to an ancient frame, must needs try their hand at the same creative work. But no society will stand but one, and that one the Church of Christ."

The Hypsistasian (so his associate was called) had little to reply; and was glad to close the conversation, by saying that his road here parted from that of our travellers. Eusebius, who proved to be intimate with Pamphilus, and on his way to visit him, proceeded with the young Roman. They soon reached his house, and were greeted with the most hearty reception.

"Well, Eusebius," said Pamphilus, "how advance your historical collections; and what are you at present seeking?"

"My purpose," said Eusebius, "is to visit the library at Jerusalem which was collected by Alexander, its former bishop. It is said to contain letters from the early fathers of our Church, which may be of essential service."

“ My young friend,” said Pamphilus, turning to Rutilius, “ is collecting the works of all our earlier writers, that he may digest our scattered history into one body. The work is of more importance than you might at first suppose. Its object is not merely that natural curiosity which led Herodotus to examine into the early history of Greece, or Livy to record the fables which have been invented respecting the origin of Rome. But to a Christian, history is not a mere entertainment. It is the ear through which God’s voice speaks to men. In one respect we are like the Pythagoreans,—we profess not to discover the truth by our own wit, but think that the right system has been laid down once for all. For this we search the Scriptures ; but since they contain difficult passages, and since they speak of persons and institutions which no longer exist, we need the help of history to teach us what interpretation was put upon doubtful passages by those who were best able to comprehend them. You see there, upon my table, a roll containing the words of St. John. Beside it is another, in which are the letters of the martyr Ignatius. Of St. John’s words, many are so clear that a child might comprehend them ; but there are others which touch upon such lofty secrets, that they have made men choose the eagle as the fittest emblem for his penetrating character. Now, it is an especial comfort to me, when I can find how Ignatius received the teaching of St. John. I know that Ignatius was

accounted by good judges a man of great wisdom ; for the Apostles themselves chose him to be their successor in ruling over the principal city of Syria. I am sure that he was sincere ; for he gave up his life as a witness to the truth. That he was a holy man, all the Churches witnessed at the time of his death. Indeed, they put such honour upon his letters, as to read them in the public service. And even if I could think so highly of myself as to suppose that I might be a martyr for the truth, yet how many opportunities had he of judging respecting the Apostle's meaning, of which I am destitute ! They lived nearly at the same time ; for Ignatius died but about fifteen years after the Apostle. They lived not far from one another, and had opportunities of intercourse in abundance. And what is true of us at the present day is true much more of our descendants. There can be no reasonable man in after-times, who will not feel how much less fitted he is to form a true judgment of the Apostle's meaning than those who had waited on his steps and listened to his words."

Pamphilus had begun by addressing Rutilius ; but as he proceeded, he turned to some young men who were seated in his apartment, and who appeared to be his pupils. When he had concluded, one of them asked why it was that the language of Ignatius was so different from that of the Apostles on the subject of the Christian priesthood.

" Plato," he said, " had, as I know, an esoteric,

or inner doctrine, which was supposed to be handed down among his disciples; did the Apostles leave any such traditional record distinct from holy Scripture?"

"Certainly not," said Pamphilus.

"Was not that," interrupted another, "the very thing which our Lord censured, when He complained that the Jews forsook the commandment of God to follow their own traditions?"

"You make an unfair application of our Lord's words," said the first speaker: "there may, as Pamphilus says, have been no unwritten record; but if God had been pleased that such should have been given, it would not have been human tradition, but divine."

"There you speak justly," said Pamphilus; "and when I said that no such unwritten record existed, I meant not that it *could* not, but that it *did* not exist. For where is it? We know what is meant by holy Scripture, because the several books which compose it are quoted by our forefathers. They were known in the days of our great Origen; for he wrote commentaries upon them. Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria spoke of most of them fifty years earlier. Sooner still came Irenæus and Justin. Hegesippus composed his history but fifty years after St. John's death; and at that time the Church used to believe the same books inspired which we now do. But who ever heard, in all this time, of any traditional record over and above the writings of the Apostles? Our early fathers refer us to what

was written ; and as they stood nearest to the fountain-head, they could enter best into the meaning of the Apostles. We believe that this view of truth is the real mind of the Spirit ; and we must refer, therefore, to the like authorities with them."

As Pamphilus stopped here, the young man, who appeared to be a convert from Judaism, asked again, " Why is it, then, that Ignatius uses expressions different from those of Scripture ? For instance, by the words ' priest ' and ' altar ' he means something in the Christian dispensation ; whereas in the New Testament these names have reference to our ancient covenant."

" Not always," said Pamphilus. " In writing to your own countrymen, St. Paul (for the sentiments are doubtless his, however uttered) tells them that we also ' have an altar ; ' and St. John, writing when the words were no longer liable to be mistaken, speaks of Christian priests. But this is a subject which it is of importance that you should understand ; because it touches upon what I have had occasion to tell you already, that the promises of God to your nation are, in fact, fulfilled in the Church of Christ.

" Your covenant was understood from the first to be only a preparatory one. The first great change which it underwent was in the appointment of kings. This was brought about through the sinfulness of your fathers ; but it led to one purpose of your covenant, the discovery, namely, of the future

kingdom of Messiah. That He should sit upon the throne of David; that of His kingdom should be no end; that it should excel Solomon's greatness; that all nations should do Him service;—these were truths which were promulgated on the establishment of your ancient kingdom. Thus can God's providence bring good out of evil, and make 'the fierceness of man turn to His praise.' Now, it has been the same in that much greater crime which led to the final change in your system. The destruction of your true King has been a step which your nation made unwittingly towards the accomplishment of the purposes of God. Your covenant was not to be done away, but to be fulfilled. Its sacrifices did not cease because they were unlawful, but because they were unnecessary. Our Lord Himself obeyed the precepts of Moses. His Apostles at first did the like. Till Cornelius was called into the Church, they thought that obedience to the law of Moses was necessary, and that the Christian Church would consist of none but enlightened Jews. So soon as Gentiles also were brought into Christ's fold, they understood, by the teaching of God's Spirit, that the Church was to be a kingdom which should include all nations. Yet those who had been Jews continued to be Jews still. They observed Moses' law, as a thing which was decent and expedient, if it was not necessary. St. Paul shaved his head, and employed the priest to offer a sacrifice in his name. St. James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, lived to

the last in the strictest obedience to the law. St. Peter and St. John went like other Jews to pray in the temple. Even the Apostle of the Gentiles declared that he was a 'Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee,' and that 'for the hope of Israel he was bound.' There was no reason why your whole nation might not have become Christians, and yet continued to join in the worship of the temple. No doubt many Jews thought the order so express that they should observe the precepts of Moses, that they could not, with a safe conscience, forego them; whatever might be done by others, yet persons of Israelitish blood would be liable, they supposed, to the fearful judgments decreed in the book of Deuteronomy, if they departed from the commands of their lawgiver.

"Now, if the whole nation, while it adhered to this belief, had yet received the further doctrines of our Lord and His Apostles, who can say that some clear declaration might not have been given them, that the purpose of their law was now fulfilled, and that the customs which belonged to the Church's infancy were superseded by the institutions of its maturer age? It is somewhat curious that we have no express order in our Scriptures that the sacrifices and usages of the Jewish law should be left off. We are told, indeed, that they were not necessary; but the Apostles declared they were lawful, and their own practice shewed that they thought them expedient. They seemed to be waiting for some decisive declaration that the Jewish system

was ended. And since the nation of Israel continued to reject Him of whom Moses had prophesied, and only kept to the letter of their law, without the obedience which it was meant to produce,—therefore, when this decisive declaration came, it came in wrath. The law was given amidst the smoke of Sinai; and the flames of Jerusalem declared it to be fulfilled. By destroying their city and nation; by driving them from the land which He had given to their fathers; by rendering the observance of their law impossible, and putting an end to their temple-service,—God was pleased to shew that the prophecies of Moses were fulfilled, and that Israel had ceased to be a nation.

“So our brethren understood. They had before joined, so far as they could, in the Jewish service. They had waited to see whether the Synagogue would become one with the Church. Even when St. Paul visited Gentile cities, he began, if he could, to teach in the Jewish assembly. He did not separate the disciples till he was compelled. By the Sabbath was still meant the Jewish day of rest. The priests were those who still existed according to the law. Even the question, how ministers would have authority, when those were gone to whom our Lord had given His miraculous commission, remained unanswered. St. Paul was contented to appoint Timothy and Titus to act under him, as subordinate Apostles, by a special commission; of the future order of the Church he declared nothing. So long did it

please God to wait, that Israel might have the full guilt of rejecting the Gospel, and that not one jot or tittle of the law should fail. But so soon as the measure of Israel's iniquities were filled up, the whole scene was changed. The remaining Apostles met immediately in Judæa to appoint a successor to St. James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, who had been murdered by his countrymen two years before. In your inquiries into the past," he said, turning to Eusebius, "you find this meeting mentioned as of great importance."

"I do," replied Rutilius's companion. "I see it is stated that our Lord's surviving brethren, as well as the remaining Apostles, attended it. St. John, of course, was there; and he was the means of establishing the system of our Church as it now lasts in that part of Asia to which he afterwards moved."

"Yes," said Pamphilus; "and before his gospel was written, we see by his vision of the Revelations, that every Church had its angel or bishop. For this the Apostles seem to have waited only till Jerusalem was destroyed. And now," he said, turning to the young man whom he had at first addressed, "do you not discern why Ignatius might naturally employ words different from those used by the Apostles?"

"If, as you say, our system ended at the destruction of Jerusalem, there certainly could not be the same danger of confusion in his speaking of priests and altars as belonging to the Christian covenant. But are the words proper ones? Is there

any thing in the Christian covenant which can be called a sacrifice in the same sense with the sacrifice of our Lord ?”

“None whatever,” replied Pamphilus ; “our Lord’s is the only sacrifice which can make an atonement for sin, and He Himself is the only High-priest. But if this is a reason against speaking of Christian priests, it is equally a reason against speaking of Jewish ; neither had the ancient covenant any sacrifice which could take away sin, save the sacrifice of Christ. What says St. Paul,—‘It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin.’ Our Lord’s sacrifice is common to both covenants ; and it is only by way of figure or prophecy that your sacrifices could be said to foreshew, or ours to recall it. We have sacrifices,—prayers, praise, the eucharist ; the prophets of old declared that in all places incense should be presented to God and a pure offering ; and I see not that, when the danger of mistake had passed away, those who ministered them might not as fitly be called priests as the sons of Aaron. And thus it is that the offering up of the Gentiles is acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.”

“If this be all,” replied the young man, “what do you mean by speaking either of the sons of Aaron, or of your present ministers, as God’s priests ?”

“I mean,” said Pamphilus, “that they are set apart to offer sacrifices. The Greek name for this

office, as you must perceive, means one who is hallowed, or set apart. The same thing is plainly signified by the title of presbyter (priest), which is usual among those who speak the Latin tongue, and which implies that such respect as belongs to age is due to those who are selected for this hallowed purpose. Now, as you know, men have been as truly set apart among us to offer sacrifices as among your countrymen. The prayers of the people, when they meet together for God's service, the holy eucharist,—these are our sacrifices ;—yours were incense and slaughtered animals."

"But is it not an important distinction," said the other, "that our priests were allowed to have immediate access to God's presence in His temple? Does not this mark them out, in a peculiar sense, as mediators for the people?"

"Even they," replied Pamphilus, "were but mediators in a derived and subordinate manner. In the highest sense there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. But you must not suppose that our ministers have not their own more peculiar admission to God's presence. The second temple was stated by the prophets to be more glorious than the first; yet it was no outward magnificence on which its claim was grounded. Our Lord's presence there, in the shrine of His humanity, was a more special consecration than God's earlier manifestation of Himself in cloud and flame. Now, it is in Christian assemblies,—in those solemn meet-

ings of Christ's Church, which are summoned according to His appointed order,—that our Lord is more peculiarly near. Their numbers may be few, but He is with them. 'Where wo or three are gathered together in My name,' He declared, in reference to His Church's solemnities, 'there am I in the midst of them.' This is the reason why peculiar places have been set apart from the first for public worship. The upper room at Jerusalem, where the Apostles assembled to break bread, was the best and most detached apartment which circumstances then permitted them to set apart for that purpose. So soon as their means permitted, they removed from the houses of individuals to those separate buildings which still last among us. These we call the Lord's house; just as we have authority from the Apostles to call the weekly anniversary of Christ's resurrection the Lord's day. Both are especially holy; and those who minister for the congregation under such favoured circumstances are as truly, though not as manifestly, in God's presence, as the high-priest when he entered to the mercy-seat within the veil."

"If this be the case," said the young man, "the name of priest may be as fitly given now as it was to those who offered victims as a prediction of our Lord's coming. But how is it that you called the prayers of the people an offering? Is not the eucharist more especially the Christian sacrifice?"

Pamphilus. "Yes, it is; for then we especially

record Christ's death ; our prayers are offered with more peculiar acceptance, because that is our main service : then it is that, in a signal manner, we present ourselves, and the oblation which is about to remind us of the sacrifice of the death of Christ upon the spiritual altar."

" You mean the bread and wine, which are to be consecrated as shewing forth Christ's death."

Pamphilus. " These are no doubt included. When our Lord first appointed this mystic feast, He employed bread and wine, which had been presented as an offering to God in the service of your passover ; and we follow exactly the example which He gave. We first present before Him ourselves, our souls and bodies, and with them this simple and unostentatious offering. Out of it is then taken what to the worthy receiver becomes the means of being engrafted in the mystic body of Christ. The consecrated elements, thus bestowed, are the medium by which each man becomes a sharer in that great sacrifice which, once for all, was offered for us upon the cross. And St. Paul expressly compares the act of those who partake in them with that participation in the ancient sacrifices which was allowed to those who had brought them to the temple. ' Behold, Israel after the flesh : are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar ? The parallel, therefore, seems to justify the comparison of our sacrifices, though not with that of Christ, yet with those of the ancient ritual."

The young men now rose to depart; Pamphilus having first invited Rutilius to visit him again on an early day,—a request with which he was most willing to comply.

CHAPTER XI.

A Christian Church. The Discipline of Secrecy. Asceticism.

From thence far off he unto him did shew
A little path, that was both steep and long,
Which to a goodly city led his view,
Whose walls and towers were builded high and strong—
Of pearl and precious stone, that earthly tongue
Cannot describe, nor wit of man can tell—
Too high a ditty for my simple song :
The city of the great King hight it well,
Wherein eternal peace and happiness doth dwell.

As he thereon stood gazing, he might see
The blessed angels to and fro descend
From highest heaven in gladsome company,
And with great joy into that city wend,
As commonly as friend does with his friend.
Whereat he wondered much, and 'gan inquire
What stately building durst so high extend
Her lofty towers unto the starry sphere,
And what unknownen nation there empeopled were.

Faery Queen.

ON his first visit to Pamphilus, the presence of so many disciples had prevented Rutilius from making the inquiries which he wished respecting what had passed during the preceding night; but he hoped to be more successful next day. He spent some hours in the morning in viewing the splendid buildings with which king Herod had adorned Cæsarea : his grand port; and the noble mole, containing stones of fifty

feet in length, which gave security to the harbour. Such, thought the young Roman, are the effects of our ascendancy over these indolent and unpractical Orientals. He continued his examination the longer, because he thought that any strangers who were visiting Cæsarea, would in all probability be to be found in places of such public resort. But no where could be seen the martial form of Marcellus, or the well-remembered figure of his beautiful fellow-traveler. And he was glad when the arrival of a suitable hour enabled him to renew his visit to Pamphilus.

“I have been seeing your town,” he said, on his entrance: “for a provincial capital, your public buildings are splendid and substantial.”

“Herod built them, no doubt, to gain credit with his Roman masters,” said Pamphilus, “as he beautified their temple to conciliate the Jews.”

“But what is that large building which I saw on a hill behind the palace?” said Rutilius; “it seems but recently built.”

“That building,” replied the other, “is our church. Since a lengthened security has allowed us to profess our religion publicly, our people have raised many such edifices.”

“Do you allow others to enter it?” asked the Roman.

“Certainly,” said Pamphilus. “There are even parts of our service in which you might yourself share, though its more solemn portions are reserved merely for our own people. It is the period of the

day at which I am about to go there; and, if you wish, I will myself introduce you."

As Rutilius gave a ready assent, they set forth together. On their way, he asked his companion whether this was the only Christian church in the city. Pamphilus told him that at no great distance was a place which the Christians had formerly frequented in times of persecution, and which they still employed for some especial solemnities. Rutilius was at no loss to understand what was meant; and by further inquiries, he learnt that it was very usual for the Christians to assemble an hour or two before daylight, partly as a memorial of the time when they could assemble in safety at no other period, and partly for the convenience of those who were occupied all day in secular business.

The size and magnificence of the church equalled the expectation which Rutilius had formed of it at a distance. To the west of it was a lofty portico, leading to an open court, which separated the sacred building from the adjoining street. In the centre was a fountain, where Pamphilus stopped to wash his hands, before entering the main sanctuary. "This, I suppose, is some sort of holy water," said Rutilius. "In our temples, as you doubtless know, the worshippers are sprinkled with a water of lustration."

"There is some resemblance between the customs," replied Pamphilus; "but ours differs from yours, and has a different source. This fountain

contains nothing but common water ; and we use it merely as an outward memorial of that purification of heart which is especially needed when we enter God's presence. Such outward washing is doubtless useless, if unaccompanied by inward preparation ; yet has our Master said, ' This ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.' Your holy water may at first have been a testimony of man's consciousness of his inward defilements ; but at present it is only an example of the blindness of superstition, since it seeks, by outward means, to cleanse the heart."

Thus saying, they approached the ascent which led into the church, Pamphilus giving alms as he went to a cripple and some poor people, who were seated on the steps. " You see," he said, with a smile, " whom our King chooses for His attendants. Here are the guards of the royal palace."¹

On entering, Rutilius found himself in a lofty and extensive building ; but though his eye could trace the roof from one end to the other, yet his view below was obstructed by a rich screen-work of wood, which was drawn right across, at about twenty feet from him, and rose about twelve feet in height. Two handsome folding-doors, however, in the very middle of this partition, opened a vista to the furthest end of the church, where he saw a table or altar like that which he had seen in the church at the ruins,

¹ Bingham's *Antiquities*, viii. 4. 1 ; where see a description of the general arrangement of the ancient churches.

except that it was of wood ;¹ and perceived that the middle and the other end of the building were crowded with people. As he entered, he could see that Pamphilus bowed towards the altar at the further end, uttering, at the same time, some words in an under-tone to himself. In the outer compartment, as that which they had entered appeared to be, were only a few persons, standing near the folding-doors, or at its further extremities ; and Rutilius wondered at the unsociable disposition which kept them from joining their companions. Their dejected look, moreover, gave him by no means a favourable expectation respecting what he should witness within. As the two new-comers entered, one of them came up to Pamphilus ; and Rutilius's surprise increased at observing that, though evidently not a poor man, he addressed some very urgent request to his companion. "What ; more of your beggars !" he said, when the man had retired again to his place. "Yes," replied the other ; "this is indeed a beggar, but not for silver and gold. We are taught that the prayers of the faithful are their most valuable gifts. And this is one of those unhappy persons, who having fallen into open sin, has been excluded for a time from the assembly of the faithful."

¹ No stone altars can be shewn to have been used before the time of Constantine, except those which Cardinal Bona describes as found in cemeteries at Rome, and which consisted of large stone slabs, supported by two or more pillars beneath. —BONA's *Res Liturgicæ*, i. 20. 1.

“How is this?” said Rutilius; “is it not your very principle that your Master promises pardon to the sinner? Even the mysteries of the heathen promise this.”

Pamphilus. “Our Master not only promises, but bestows it. But those who, after having been admitted in baptism to complete forgiveness, afterwards fall into open sin, are subjected to open shame, both that we may be assured of the sincerity of their repentance, and that their impunity may not tempt others to offend. They remain here, therefore, while the Church assembles to worship, and ask the prayers of those who are about to approach God’s more immediate presence.”

Rutilius. “But why not allow them to come, and ask pardon for themselves? Who can stand in more need of it? Do you mean that there is no pardon after a man has thus fallen?”

Pamphilus. “We do not exclude any one from pardon. But our reason for separating him from the prayers of the congregation is, that this is the custom which the Apostles introduced, and something similar was the order which God had beforetime appointed among His people the Jews. But this separation does not continue, in common, beyond a certain period. After a time such persons are admitted among the number of those who stand within these gates, and finally they are restored to their place in the congregation.”

Thus saying, Pamphilus led his companion

through the gates into a second space, separated from the main area of the building only by a very low wooden screen, parallel to the higher one through which they had passed, and about fifteen feet from it. Full in view, at the further end of the church, was the altar, raised on steps, and standing but a few feet from the wall : a railing stood at some distance in front of it. As the altar was a large oblong square, and the wall behind it projected outwards, in the form of a semicircle, there was room around the ends, and behind it, for a row of seats : the one immediately behind the centre of the altar, which was kept, as Pamphilus said, for the bishop, being raised above the rest ; the others were designed, he added, for the presbyters, or priests of the second order. In the middle of the central area, but little raised above the people, were two desks, which Pamphilus called ambos, (from the Greek word signifying to ascend). These Rutilius perceived to resemble the places from which he had heard the Scriptures read and the sermon preached at the ruins. A deacon was already in one of them, preparing to read ; and Pamphilus, who was going to his place near the altar, committed Rutilius to the care of another, telling him that notice would be given when it was time for him to depart. Rutilius had a place assigned him between the higher and the lower screens, not far from that where Pamphilus had told him that the penitents were placed before their final admission among the congregation. The service now opened

with a period of silence, during which each prayed apart; and this Rutilius perceived was the same thing which he had watched before, when he was unable to discern what was passing. After this, all rose from their knees; and the singing of psalms, together with the reading of lessons from Scripture, succeeded.

When the Scriptures had been read, the bishop stood upon the steps in front of the altar, and addressed the people. He began by repeating some words of what had just been read—words which had struck Rutilius the more, because they seemed to connect themselves, in a singular manner, with the service which he had lately witnessed. The words were, “My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.”

The bishop spoke somewhat as follows :¹

“Our Lord Jesus Christ, as we heard when the holy Gospel was read, has exhorted us, by the promise of eternal life, to eat His flesh and drink His blood. You who have heard these words have not all, as yet, been able to understand them. Those of you who are baptised and are faithful know His meaning; but those who are as yet styled catechumens, or hearers, might hear when the words were read, but could you understand? My discourse, then, must address itself to both classes. Let those

¹ The following address is abridged from St. Augustine's Sermons, § 132.

who already eat the flesh of the Lord and drink His blood, consider what it is which they eat and drink, lest, as the Apostle says, they eat and drink their own condemnation. But let those who do not yet eat and drink, hasten, since they are invited, to such a banquet. Christ is now daily feeding His people; there is His table, which is spread in the midst. Why is it, let me ask those of you who come as hearers, that you see His table, and do not approach to the banquet? Perhaps when the Gospel was read just now, you were saying in your hearts, What can be the meaning of His expression, 'My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed?' How is the Lord's flesh eaten? How do men drink His blood? Who is it, then, that shuts the door and prevents you from learning these secrets? They are veiled, it is true; but you have but to wish, and the veil shall be withdrawn. Come near and profess your belief, and the difficulty is removed. For what our Lord Jesus says, the faithful already understand. But you are called a hearer, yet you are deaf. Your bodily ears are opened—you hear the sounds addressed to you; but the ears of your heart are yet closed, for you do not understand their meaning. But come, Easter is at hand. Give in your name for baptism. If the sacred season does not awaken your feelings, yet let the interest of these words prevail; come that you may understand our Lord's assurance, 'He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him.'

“ But if the catechumens, my brethren, require admonition, that without delay they may draw near to this great blessing of regeneration, what care should I take in building up the faithful, that they may approach with profit, and not eat and drink this banquet to their own condemnation ! The mean towards worthy receiving is a holy life. Do you, therefore, who cannot preach by sermons, preach by example, that those who are not as yet baptised may so hasten to follow you, as not to perish by your mistake ? Such of you as are bound by the ties of married life, be faithful to its obligations. Let the husband afford an example of that purity which he requires. Grievous it is that in this respect the weaker sex is often not equalled by the stronger—I speak here to the single as well as the married. It may be that women are more under subjection to those who care for their conduct. But have not you too, O man, One to fear who is greater than all ? You go out, and are in His sight ; you enter, and are not hid ; the torch burns, and He sees you ; the torch is extinguished, He still discerns ; you enter into your chamber, and He is present,—nay, the very secrets of your heart are not concealed. Fear Him, whose eye is perpetually on your ways, and let the very awe of His presence keep you from sin. Or, if you will go astray, find some place for your offences where His eye cannot penetrate.

“ Let those who have devoted themselves to a single life be still more on their guard, that they

may abstain, not only from the act, but from the temptation to sin. Let them remember, of whichever sex they are, that it is a copy of the angelic life which they are leading below. For the angels of God neither marry nor are given in marriage. This shall be our state after the resurrection. How much better are those who enter upon this state here below ! Keep, then, to your several states ; for God reserves for you your several blessings. The resurrection of the dead is compared to the stars of heaven. ' One star,' the Apostle says, ' differeth from another star in glory ; so also is the resurrection of the dead.' The virgin's estate will shine with one light ; that of married purity with another ; with another, that of sanctified widowhood. They will shine with various light, but all be there ; their splendour will be different, their heaven the same."

The bishop went on with an appeal to the consciences of men, which, to Rutilius, who knew the predominant profligacy of the heathen world, seemed to argue that the worshippers whom he saw before him were possessed of some safeguard against corruption, which could no where else he met with. When the sermon was over, the deacon who had conducted him to his place made a sign for his departure : and while going out, he heard the proclamation for the departure of unbelievers, which, on the previous occasion, he had been unable to obey. The doors were then closed ; but he waited in the neighbourhood of the church till the completion of

the service enabled him to renew his conversation with Pamphilus.

After an interval of about an hour, Rutilius was rejoined by his companion. His first question was as to the grounds on which he had been excluded.

"I see you have your hidden rites," he said, "which would be interrupted by the presence of the uninitiated. Our Grecian mysteries also profess to reveal to a select few the secrets of the eternal world, of which the generality are ignorant. I met a friend of mine the day after his initiation, and he answered my questions in words, which, as a man of letters, I have no doubt you will remember: 'I approached the confines of death; and having trod on the threshold of Proserpine, I returned from it, being carried through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining with a splendid light; and I drew near to the gods beneath and gods above, and adored them.'"

"I remember the passage which you quote from that gross fellow Apuleius," replied Pamphilus; "and I am willing enough to believe that your heathen mysteries may in part have been founded on the natural longing of man's nature for some deeper view of the realities of life than is afforded by your popular polytheism. But you must not confound our discipline of secrecy with any such uncertain rites. There is a resemblance, no doubt. How should it be otherwise? Your worship is the corruption of that ancient system which God revealed to the

first fathers of mankind. He so adapted it to man's nature, that all the subsequent impurities which have covered, could not altogether conceal it. Cato's words, when Labienus asked him to consult the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, as Lucan gives them, are true in a sense which he did not design :

‘ Why here demand the will of Heaven ?
At the first birth of nature given,
For mankind's universal sake,
His sovereign will the Highest spake.’

You must be aware how many words in your Latin language resemble words in Greek ; but it can easily be shewn that these words have not been borrowed from one another. Their likeness arises from the fact, that the two languages had a common origin ; and the same cause has been at work in the religious usages of nations. The corrupted traditions of the heathen flowed from a source which originally was clear and uncontaminate.”

“ What, then,” asked Rutilius, “ is the difference between our concealed mysteries and what you call your discipline of secrecy ?”

“ That question I cannot fully answer,” replied the other, “ unless you first tell me a thing which you either cannot or may not reveal,—namely, what it is which is taught by your heathen mysteries. Some of them are known to be mixed up with the ordinary abominations of your worship ; others are strongly suspected of inculcating at bottom an universal scepticism. But they differ altogether from

us, because we make no sort of reserve about what we teach; it is plainly declared, as well in our sacred writings as in the works of our apologists. What we teach respecting our Lord,—His nature, His sacrifice for us, the sacraments, by which we participate in the blessings He bestows,—these things are declared in the plainest words in our Scriptures; or, if it may be thought that the Scriptures are not likely to be read by strangers, how can they be more plainly stated than by our great Justin, in the work which he addressed to the heathen emperor Antoninus? You see, that we use no reserve at all respecting the doctrines which we teach in our assemblies."

Rutilius. "Why is it, then, that you excluded me? and what did your bishop mean by saying that I could not understand the words he was explaining?"

Pamphilus. "We have no objection to tell you, in general, what we do; but there are many reasons why we cannot allow you to be present, and therefore why you cannot fully understand what is related. Not that we wish to conceal what it is in which we are engaged. On the contrary, Justin long ago made it public even to the heathen. He mentions our assemblies for prayer, and describes the more solemn part of them as commencing with a kiss of peace. 'Then,' he goes on, 'there is brought to our principal minister bread, and a cup containing wine and water. And he, after having rendered praise to the Father, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, offers the sacrifice of thanks, at considerable length,

for our having been thought worthy of this blessing by God. And when he has finished his prayer, and the offering of his thanks, all the people exclaim 'Amen.' After which, the deacons give to each person who is present some of this bread and wine, which has been offered up as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and carry out portions of it to those who are not present.'

" 'This food,' Justin goes on, 'we call the eucharist; and no one may partake of it but believers, who have been baptised, and who live according to Christ's command. For we do not receive it as common bread, or a common cup; but as Jesus Christ our Saviour was incarnate by the word of God, and took flesh and blood for our salvation, so have we been instructed, that the food which has been offered up as a sacrifice of thanks according to a form of prayer which He appointed, is the flesh¹ and blood of the incarnate Jesus, and that by it our flesh and blood, by a spiritual change, receive nourishment.'

" You see we make no scruple of telling what

¹ It may be well to point out, for the sake of persons who are not acquainted with the real nature of the controversy respecting transubstantiation, that Justin's words expressly contradict that novel doctrine of the Romish Church. He speaks of the elements after consecration as being still bread and wine,—the specific point which the Romanists deny. His words assert the doctrine of the real presence in no other sense than that in which it is taught in the Catechism of the Church of England, i. e. that "the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper."



our mysteries are. Although, in truth, what I have quoted from Justin is nothing more than what you have heard read, word for word, in our lesson to-day."

"If this, then, be all," said Rutilius, "why should not I, or any one else, be present?"

"I have told you before," answered the other, that we Christians do not profess to devise customs for ourselves, but follow those for which we have the authority of our Lord and His Apostles. We should think it a sufficient reason, therefore, for excluding strangers, that when this sacrament was celebrated in early time, none but the brethren were allowed to partake it. Besides, this sacrament is offered to all men, as the means whereby, after they have believed, they may be united to Christ. It is an insult, therefore, and ingratitude to the Giver of all blessings, when He has spread His board for the support of man, if those, who ought to be guests, turn their backs upon His invitation. And how can we let those be present, when we offer our thanks to God, who at the very moment are insulting His majesty? These would be sufficient reasons; but there is another still more immediate;—it is for your own safety you are excluded."

"What!" replied the other, "do those who witness this service suffer injury by any magical influence? I know that respecting some of our secret rites there is this opinion; but among you I did not look for it.

“It is not this danger to which I referred,” said Pamphilus ; “but to one not less serious. I hope the day will come when I shall see you among those who draw near to God’s altar. If you do, you will find that, by feasting at His heavenly table, the common and simple elements of this natural world will be made to minister to your benefit. Though mere bread and wine, as Justin calls them, you will find from what you thus partake an especial advantage. Now, to obtain this, you must draw near with reverence. An awful sense of God’s presence—a faithful appreciation of the nature of His gifts ;—this is the grand thing you will want. But if you have been in the habit of seeing what is done, before you have been taught to form that temper of mind in which you can come with advantage, there will be great danger of your being possessed with such an irreverent spirit as will prevent you, in the language of our sacred books, ‘from discerning the Lord’s body.’ This ground of our conduct was brought forward a few years back by Archelaus, one of our bishops, in an argument which he maintained against Manes, the author of a new sect among the Persians. This Manes denied God’s almighty power, and man’s free agency. And Archelaus, having to explain why the Church was not accustomed to speak to the Gentiles those mysteries which it reserved for the faithful, said to him,—‘To a Gentile we declare not the mysteries concerning the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit ; nor before catechumens do we discourse

plainly respecting mysteries: but many times we speak in a covert manner, that the faithful may understand, and the ignorant receive no injury.' "

"And yet," said Rutilius, "you do declare these things to all men."

Pamphilus. "We make known, even to the heathen, our Lord's Godhead, and the redemption through His blood; but the doctrines of His divine nature, which are contained in our creeds, we do not dwell upon till men come to us for instruction. In like manner, though we tell the catechumens what is designed by the Lord's supper, yet the particulars of that sacred rite, the mode of performing it, the exact nature of its benefits, we keep to ourselves. After all that you have heard respecting it, you would not be able to imitate our custom. Who performs the different parts of the ceremony,—in what order,—with what words,—you would be unable to discover."

Rutilius thought of the service which in so singular a manner he had beheld, and felt that Pamphilus spoke truly.

Pamphilus proceeded,—"Since I saw you at Tyre, I have heard a story, which shews in a very curious manner the necessity of this caution. Some little distance north-east of Tyre is a city called Helio-polis, where a great temple of Venus has corrupted the people's manners, so that they are sunk into the lowest depths of debasement. In this place they very lately had some public shows. You know that

at such times, and in such places, the most dreadful crimes are often exhibited on the open stage. This time, by way of varying the thing, they determined, for the amusement of the people, to exhibit the spectacle of Christian baptism. How they learnt what is done I know not; perhaps they had some apostate among them. Though, indeed, how far they imitated it exactly, I have not heard. However, they prepared one of their company, dressed him up as Christians are dressed for baptism, and immersed him publicly in water. But it pleased God to rebuke this mockery of His rite. Gelasinus, the man who had received this sham baptism, (for it certainly was not administered by any one who had authority to perform it), on coming out of the water, positively refused to go on with his part. 'I am a Christian!' he exclaimed; 'I saw, when in the water, such a glory of God, as impressed me with the greatest awe: I am ready to die a Christian!' The profligate people were so enraged at this sudden obstacle to their amusement, that they rushed upon the stage, hurried Gelasinus out of the theatre, and stoned him to death, in the very dress which had been put upon him in derision of our faith. This event, which happened, as I was assured, this very summer, is surely a sufficient reason for that discipline of secrecy which we practise."

"There was another point in your bishop's sermon," said Rutilius, "on which I should like to be

informed. He mentioned the great excellence of a single life. Do you maintain that the state of marriage is in itself unholy?"

"Far from it," said Pamphilus: "great numbers of our bishops and priests are married men; and that they maintain marriage to be unholy, is one of the very errors for which we have excluded the heretics."

Rutilius. "But are there not among you many of both sexes who live single lives, and do you not employ them in your Church-offices? Among us, you know, a single life is considered discreditable, and there are express laws against it."

"The difference between our view and yours," replied Pamphilus, "does not arise from our thinking marriage unlawful; it is the natural result of a grand contrast which there is between the Christian system and that of the heathen world. You are for the present state,—we for that which is to come. Sense, therefore is your guide,—faith is ours. You measure the useful, the beautiful, and the grand, by the rule of nature,—but we by the principles of grace. Your poets, therefore, and your artists, exhibit in its utmost perfection the present loveliness of the visible creation; but what is ideal, immaterial, impalpable, they do not attempt. It would be otherwise with Christian artists. They might not equal the sculptors of Greece in exhibiting the natural form; but in representing the spiritual es-

sence of imaginary excellence, I should not wonder if they surpassed even the achievements of Apelles. Before the Christian poet, likewise, there open prospects, which, if not so vividly imaging forth the scenes of this world as the works of Homer, may yet aspire to a loftier view into the realities of the next.

“Now what may be said of the arts is true respecting your laws and manners. Your best institutions aim merely at the stability of states, and the display of the domestic virtues. They cannot rise beyond the present state. They are but the development of natural principles. With you, therefore, a single state is looked on with discredit, because supposed to be sought only from idleness and a love of self-indulgence. It is opposed to those social excellences, which are all that your system comprehends. With us it is otherwise. Though not forgetting or undervaluing the domestic duties, we are taught that there are others of a more ennobling, though not more necessary kind. The perpetual view of the eternal world; preparation for it; the display of its principles in this adulterous and evil generation—these we feel to be a duty as binding as that of leaving children to the state, and swelling the armies of the emperor.

“Now although these higher functions of our nature may be performed by married men, yet our Scriptures tell us that a single life affords peculiar

advantages for their display : and therefore, though not in itself more meritorious,—for no act of ours in reality merits any thing,—yet we consider that a single life, when entered upon with a view to God's service, tends most to the display of that angelic nature of which it is our object to afford an example to mankind.

“Then you must remember how many persons join us from disgust at the profligacy of their heathen relations, and are anxious for some employment which may give a new object to their wounded affections. We bind them, as you know, by no promise—they may even leave us if they choose ; but we give them an opportunity of serving God in a manner which, except among ourselves, is absolutely unknown. And perhaps the great contrast between the self-denial which such persons generally adopt, and the gross selfishness of the world around, may have led some of our writers to use exaggerated language in describing their conduct. Certainly nothing has more tended to advance our cause with refined and noble spirits than the example which they afford. The heathen world needs to be startled by some great instance of self-denial. Men have grown callous in their vices ; selfishness has become the professed element of their being. It is not an ordinary specimen of religion which will affect their hearts. But when they see persons of rank and fortune cast away all that they hold so

valuable, and with a willing mind embrace poverty and an abstracted life for the sake of God's service, they cannot but recognise the reality of that Gospel which is proclaimed among them."

They had now reached Pamphilus's house; and Rutilius left him, with a promise of calling next day.



Moses taking off his shoe from his foot.

From the Cemetery of St. Agnes at Rome.

CHAPTER XII.

Story of Rutilius's Brother. The Principle of Interpreting the Scriptures.

This is got by casting pearl to hogs
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt, when truth would set them free.
License they mean, when they cry liberty;
For who loves that must first be wise and good:
But from that mark how far they rove we see,
For all this waste of wealth and loss of blood.

MILTON.

CÆSAREA contained much which was fitted to engage a young Roman, especially if he took interest in the military or civil administration of the empire. But Rutilius was not sorry when his survey of its garrison and its public tribunals was ended, and the time came at which he had resolved to renew his visit to his Christian friend. Pamphilus was alone, and closely occupied in the preparation of various manuscripts which were extended before him.

"I fear I interrupt some interesting study," said the young Roman.

"The subject is indeed of great interest," replied the other. "I am endeavouring to ascertain what was the original text of that translation of the Old Testament which was made by the Alexandrian Jews when the use of the Hebrew tongue began to diminish among them. The work has long been

preserved in the royal library which was founded by King Ptolemy Philadelphus, but the several copies vary in their expression. It is of the more importance to know which is correct, because few of our people are acquainted with Hebrew ; and the Jews, who have the original of the Old Testament, may corrupt its declarations. In order to prevent this, I am preparing a complete version of the Old Testament in Greek. Look, for instance, at this Psalm. In it, according to the Greek version, the object of the Psalm exclaims, ‘ They pierced My hands and My feet.’ But the Jews have altered the words, rendering them, ‘ as a lion my hands and my feet.’ Their interpretation robs the passage of signification ; yet they are willing thus to alter it, rather than admit so clear a statement of our Lord’s sufferings upon the cross. Again, in this place,” he said, turning to Isaiah’s prophecy, “ occurs a remarkable prediction of our Lord’s miraculous birth : ‘ Behold,’ it is said, ‘ a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.’ Now the Hebrew word in this passage is equally applicable to the prophetess, whose son is set forth as a type of the future Messiah. But the term employed in the Greek translation fixes the passage to the supernatural signification of the same word, and shews that a miraculous birth was intended. Thus does the judgment of the ancient Jewish Church shew what signification was originally put upon these important words.”

“ Are all Christians,” asked Rutilius, “ agreed

what signification shall be put upon the words of their sacred writings?"

Pamphilus. "They all have a rule of interpretation, which, so far as it can be applied, is decisive; they consider Scripture to bear that meaning which from the first has been received among us."

"My reason for asking," said Rutilius, "is, that I have heard of a precept of your scriptural books which, from what I observe, seems not to be generally admitted. I have heard that they forbid the soldier to unsheath his sword; now I see many Christians who draw their swords without reserve in the service of the emperor."

Pamphilus. "From whom can you have heard that the words to which you refer forbid the military profession?"

"I told you once," replied Rutilius, "that family circumstances would prevent me from ever making profession of the Christian faith. I had once a brother, whose most miserable end gave to myself, and to all my kindred, an unconquerable enmity to your system."

"What was it?" said Pamphilus.

Rutilius. "My brother was a youth of much promise, ardent, courageous, affectionate; and free from all the gross excess which is so common at that age. One fault he had, that he was the prey of any strong impression upon his imagination. He was intended for the service of the army, and was making preparation for it in the house of a relation, to whose care

he had been committed. Suddenly my father received information that my brother had been practised upon by some enthusiast in the neighbourhood, and that it would be better that an instant call to service should remove him from such dangerous influence. My father immediately set out to visit him; and wrote to his relative to meet him on a certain day in the provincial town which lay upon his route, that my brother, whose name had already been given in for the legionary service, might take upon him the vow of his profession. The præfect, who was raising new levies in this place, happened to be acquainted with our family; and when my father appeared, he found my unhappy brother already standing before him. 'What is your name?' said the præfect to my brother. Judge of my father's consternation when he heard him reply, 'Why do you ask my name? I cannot be enlisted in the emperor's service; I am already servant to Christ, a King. I yield military obedience to no other leader.' The præfect, who knew that by persisting my brother would expose himself to capital punishment, affected to pay no attention to his answer, but proceeded with the usual directions. 'Let him be measured,' he said to the officer in attendance. 'His height is five feet ten inches,' replied the officer, after measuring him. 'Let him receive the military mark,' said the præfect. This was the decisive moment; all eyes were turned upon my poor brother, while my father stood by in breathless anxi-

ety, hoping that he would submit. But he positively refused to receive the imperial sign, exclaiming, 'I cannot do it; I cannot be the world's soldier, seeing that I am the soldier of God.' The præfect, who, from regard for our family, was desirous to overcome his opposition, tried to reason with him. 'You had better do it; your life is at stake.' 'You may cut off my head,' he replied; 'but I cannot receive the emperor's sign; for I have already received in baptism the sign of Christ, my God.' 'There are many Christian soldiers in the armies of Dioclesian,' said the præfect; 'why should not you serve, like the rest of them?' 'They follow their own judgment; but I cannot do what I know to be wrong. If you put upon me the badge of service, I shall but break it off again; for I cannot wear it round my neck, now that I have received the precious sign of Christ, my Saviour.'

"There was much more of this kind, too painful for me to tell you; nor can I bear to think how his young blood was shed, in consequence, by the executioner. But I was told that his conduct was much praised by the Christians; and a wealthy lady among them requested that she might be allowed to inter his body in a tomb which she had prepared for herself.¹ And are there not some words in your sacred writings which would seem to countenance his action, although so many of your people act otherwise?"

¹ This story, the subject of which was a youth named Maximilian, is recorded in the *Acta Sincera* of Ruinart, p. 300.

“It is no wonder,” said Pamphilus, “if such daring and resolution has been admired; and no doubt conscience ought to be obeyed, even if it be ill-directed. Your brother’s conduct is, at all events, as well fitted to excite applause as that of the young admirer of the Grecian philosophy—

—— he who, to enjoy
Plato’s Elysium, leaped into the sea,
Cleombrotus ——

But you would not find that what he did was approved by any well-instructed Christian; for we consider that it is the cause, and not the mere endurance of suffering, which makes the martyr.”

Rutilius. “But if your sacred writings forbid men to fight, how come you to understand the matter differently? Porphyry, with whom I once talked on the subject, told me that your Scriptures ordered men not ‘to resist evil,’ and to ‘put the sword into the sheath; for that all they who took the sword should perish by the sword.’”

“But, Rutilius,” replied the other, “you will perceive readily enough that all commands are to be understood not merely according to their sound, but according to their sense. When Pythagoras said, ‘Beware the bean,’ every rational man perceives that he was not giving directions respecting food, but that he was cautioning his followers not to be ambitious of those public employments, in the apportionment of which, by lot, this vegetable was often employed. Such, at least, do I take to have been his

meaning. Our Lord's words had, in like manner, one certain and appropriate meaning ; and we are as plainly bound to take due pains for discovering that meaning, as for obeying it."

"But how can you know that my brother had not done so? Might not he have been as good a judge as any one else of the meaning of your Scriptures? I have been informed that he professed to be particularly guided, as you have told me that you Christians are, by the Divine Spirit. The præfect asked who had persuaded him that he might not lawfully serve ; and he replied, ' My own spirit, and He who has called me.' I see not how, on your principles, he could have acted otherwise than he did."

"You think," replied Pamphilus, "that he was bound to do what his conviction, guided, as he thought himself to be, by God's Spirit, told him was right?"

"I suppose this is your principle."

"But was not this to make his own judgment a sort of God—to fancy that it could not deceive him? Now we Christians know but of one rule which cannot deceive—I mean the holy Scriptures ; and we know but of one true meaning of the holy Scriptures—that which they have borne from the first. If your brother had asked what that one meaning was, instead of fancying a meaning for himself, he would have perceived that his conviction

was not agreeable to what God has declared, and therefore that it could not really be suggested by God's Spirit."

"But what proof have you that the right meaning of your Scriptures is that which they have borne from the beginning?"

"Many proofs: first, the natural one, of which you heard me speaking the other day,—we have the writings of Christians who lived for years in habits of intercourse with the Apostles. Who so likely as these persons to understand their meaning? Besides, we know that the order and course of the Church was appointed by the Apostles; and their judgment God was pleased to approve, by giving them the power of working miracles. Had your brother inquired, he would have learned that military service had been always allowed in the Church; and he might be sure, therefore, that he was wrong in supposing that it was forbidden by Scripture."

"And can you apply this rule of yours to all doubtful cases of conduct?" said Rutilius.

"Not to all, perhaps; but to many which otherwise would present the greatest difficulties. For instance, there is little said in our Scriptures concerning the order and government of our churches. It is but incidentally that we are told that the Apostles were the stewards of the mysteries of God, and so had exclusive authority to minister the holy eucharist. But then we find mention in holy Scripture of the

order of the Church, and express commands that men should obey it. Take these two things together—the practice and the precept—and we have a direct command that men should receive, as Christians have done ever since, that order of bishops, priests, and deacons, which prevails universally among us. And this principle I might apply in many cases ; for it is the one by which all the order and outward arrangement of our worship is regulated. We see the evil of departing from it by such a case as that of your poor brother.”

“ Is his, then, an unusual instance ? ”

“ I have heard of no other of the same kind. Yet, as many men of ardent minds, and who are wanting in judgment, enter our body, it is certainly not impossible that such cases may be found.”

“ It is likely, too,” said Rutilius, “ as years roll on, that the practice of your first age will be less distinctly remembered. Thus, you may in time entirely lose the principle on which you now proceed, and every one may interpret your Scriptures, as my poor brother appears to have done, according to his own caprice.”

“ It is but too probable,” replied Pamphilus ; “ yet here we have one safeguard, of which none but a Christian can feel the force. Our Master has promised us that, while the world endures, His doctrine shall not be altogether lost, or His Church altogether infected with false doctrine. To this promise we

trust, as your countrymen do to their notion of the fated eternity of Rome's dominion, and, as I am well convinced, with better reason."

Thus ended the conversation.



"Here are the guards of the royal palace." Vide p. 156.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Visit to Jerusalem.

Those holy fields,
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet,
Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nailed
For our advantage on the bitter cross.

SHAKESPEARE.

RUTILIUS had determined to acquaint his Christian friend with the circumstances of his night-adventure near the house of Milo ; but a reluctance to introduce the subject had hitherto kept him silent. Now, however, his mind was pretty well made up to become a candidate for baptism ; and on acquainting Pamphilus next morning with his resolution, he stated to him what had happened. Pamphilus told him that he would mention the circumstance to the bishop, to whose judgment, according to the example of the Apostles, every thing which happened in the Church was referred ; adding, that before he could be admitted to the privileges of a Christian, a course of instruction would be needful ; and that as the sacred season of Lent was commencing, lectures would be given daily to those who were candidates for baptism. “ Our usual season of baptism,” he said, “ is either the day before our Lord’s resurrection, in

token that by baptism men rise to a new life ; or the day after the feast of Pentecost, because in baptism are continually poured forth the gifts of the Holy Ghost."

Pamphilus then proceeded to inquire whether Rutilius had any friends or relations in the Church. On hearing the name of his uncle, Marcellus, he said : " It was for you, then, as I supposed, that I received a message last night. Your uncle either is or has been at Jerusalem (so we generally call the city of *Ælia*) ; and hearing of you from a relation who passed through this place, by whom, as I understand, you were seen in my company, he has invited you to join him. Should you be disposed to go, you may accompany my friend Eusebius, who is travelling in that direction to-morrow. If Marcellus be still there, you may hear of him from Zambda the bishop, whose instructions are said to have been made effectual to the conversion of many soldiers in your uncle's detachment. Catechetical lectures will be given there also ; or if, as I rather fear, your uncle may have left the place, you may return here in time for their commencement."

Rutilius was at no loss to understand by whom he had been observed ; and though he had resolved to avoid an influence which he felt would be injurious to his peace, yet now that his uncle was so near him, he could not resist the temptation to see Flavia once more. He resolved, however, as he told Pam-

philus, to return after two days to Cæsarea, and to prepare himself there for holy baptism.

Next morning the rising sun saw him on the road with Eusebius, in whose company he had originally entered Cæsarea. As Pamphilus had told him what was the especial pursuit of Eusebius, he naturally turned the conversation to it, as they rode together along the side of the stream which led from Cæsarea to Megiddo. Eusebius gave a ready opportunity, by referring to Josephus's description of Cæsarea, as they turned back and saw its towers reflect the beams of the rising sun. Rutilius knew nothing of the writings of Josephus, though he had heard his name as that of a celebrated Jewish author; and he now received, with much interest, the account which Eusebius readily communicated. "Josephus," he said, "was the son of a Jewish priest, born soon after the death of Christ, who having been highly distinguished among his countrymen both for learning and ability in business, and having taken a considerable part in the Jewish war, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, afterwards gained the favour of Vespasian and his son Titus, and settled at Rome. Here he employed himself in such works as were calculated to preserve the national spirit of his dispersed countrymen, and to extend the knowledge of their peculiar character among the heathen. He first wrote a history of the war of Palestine in his native language; a work which he afterwards translated into Greek, in order to present it to his patron Ves-

pasian. Then he wrote a body of Jewish antiquities, drawn chiefly, as regards its earlier portion, from the Old Testament, but somewhat altered, from a wish to commend his work to heathen readers. He also wrote an argumentative work against a grammarian named Apion, in defence of the antiquity of the Jewish nation; and an account of the Jewish martyrs in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes: no doubt he was the more interested in them, because, by his mother's side, he was himself descended from the family of the Maccabees. His works," continued Eusebius, "are well known both among us Christians and in the heathen world; for so great was the fame of Josephus, that a statue was erected to his memory at Rome, and his works were placed in the public library."

"Why is he especially remembered by you?" said Rutilius: "does he mention your Founder?"

"He does," replied the other, "though only in a slight and incidental manner.¹ But he uses expressions respecting Him very surprising in one who was not himself a Christian. Yet that he continued a Jew makes his testimony to the state of Palestine in our Lord's time the less questionable. And we find in him the same aspect of things for which the

¹ This passage in Josephus is supposed by many persons (from its internal improbability) to be an interpolation. If so, it must have been interpolated at a very early period, since it is quoted by Eusebius.

Gospels prepare us,—the same parties among his countrymen : Herod, miscalled the Great, the same bloody tyrant which we see him in the massacre of the innocents ; the other Herod falling by a sudden visitation ; John the Baptist's character and death : —in these, and abundant other instances, Josephus gives us an opportunity of seeing the exactness of the sacred writers."

"Have you historians of your own of similar merit?" asked Rutilius.

"None of such reputation as Josephus," said his companion. "During the first century of our existence, few of our people were men of letters ; and since that time our authors have commonly aimed at the prevention of some false opinion or dangerous practice ; few of them have had leisure or desire to leave a general history of the growth of our religion. One most valuable historian we have had, whose writings happily supply us with a view of the state of religion during the age in which we most want it. We have writers enough from the time of Clement, bishop of Alexandria, who lived towards the end of the second century. But the time which is of greatest importance to us is the first age after the death of the Apostles—the period which elapsed from about the 80th to the 150th year after our Lord. Polycarp, who lived at that time, has left us but little ; Justin, whose Apologies to the emperors are in every one's hands, does not dwell much on matters of history ; Irenæus is more full, but he is rather an argumen-

tative than a narrative writer. But there is one author of that age, named Hegesippus, the importance of whose writings cannot be overrated. It is not for his talents or his critical powers that I praise him ; but the value of his works arises from his having taken the trouble to go round all our Churches, and ascertain that their rules and principles were the very same which had been established by the Apostles. This circumstance shews the identity of our system at a time when to prove its identity is of the utmost moment. It shews that our Church, which for the last century and a half has been gradually overshadowing the earth, is the very same which during the first century and a half of its existence was coming to the surface unperceived."

"Where is this valuable work of Hegesippus to be procured?" said Rutilius.

"Your question has often struck me," said the other. "We Christians have not heretofore been in general a literary people. Books are few among us, because to copy them is so expensive. At present, such works as those of Hegesippus are preserved in a few libraries, like that of my friend at Cæsarea, or that of the Church at Jerusalem, which I am going to visit. The voluminous writings of Origen are, in like manner, in the hands of Pamphilus. Happily, our sacred writings are too widely dispersed to be lost ; but supposing a persecution or a fire were to destroy a few storehouses of antiquity, many works of great value might irrecoverably perish. This

has been one reason why I have devoted my own thoughts to the study of our history. A summary of the works now in existence, with some short account of their contents, may hereafter be of great importance in rendering men acquainted with sources of information which may be no longer in existence. It is with a view to this that I am now going to Jerusalem. Alexander, who was bishop there about eighty years back, collected the works of the earliest Christian writers; and, in particular, he brought together a large number of their letters. In no other place that I know of are these to be found; and if I extract the most important portions, I shall be taking security that they do not perish by any disaster which may befall this one collection. What a loss would it be, for instance, if the letters of those two great African bishops of the last generation, Cyprian of Carthage and Dionysius of Alexandria, should be destroyed! The history of the persecution under Decius could hardly be understood without them."

Rutilius encouraged his companion to run on in this way; for he was a good deal amused at the first specimen which he had ever met with of a thoroughly literary Christian. Pamphilus was a man of great erudition; but he had much of that serious and earnest character, which looked upon literature rather as the means towards a great and holy end, than as any thing in itself of importance. But Eusebius, though apparently a good and worthy man, was one in whom the love of learning seemed to be the pre-

dominant idea. He had evidently a real belief in the truths of Scripture ; but his attachment to them seemed, in part at least, to arise from their containing the antiquities of the Christian Church. His religion appeared to be as much a species of literature as of devotion. He talked much of the possibility that some one of the reigning princes, perceiving the wide extension of the Christian faith and its obvious permanence, would be disposed to adopt and give it a trial. He expressed great fear lest some of his brethren, from want of knowledge of the world, or, as he styled it, *want of tact*, should, in such case, prejudice them against religion. Much, he thought, might be dispensed with in persons of rank. And he evidently looked with extreme horror on the prospect of another persecution, which the aspect of public affairs had of late rendered but too probable.

This was a new kind of character, Rutilius thought, among the Christians, though he had known many such among his literary friends at Athens ; and he could not but regard the existence of such men as indicative of the approach of some considerable change in their condition. It would seem, it occurred to him, as if they were about to accommodate themselves more to the ways of the world at large ; and this spirit spreading among them would make their great numbers more available for any public purpose.

These thoughts passed in a moment ; for Eusebius, who was very communicative, went on to de-

scribe to his companion the places which they passed — places which he saw with much interest, because he had lately been engaged in the study of the Scriptures.

“To our left,” he said, “is the plain of Megiddo, where king Josiah perished.¹ There is Antipatris, now half a ruin. When king Herod built it, he designed that it should be a permanent monument to his father.” Presently they reached Diospolis, which Eusebius said was the Lydda where St. Peter raised Dorcas from the dead. Then he pointed out Arimathæa, whence came Joseph, who interred our Lord; and Nob, once, as he said, a city of the priests,—now the monument of their slaughter.

Thus he continued; till at length, after passing the monument of Helena, queen of Adiabene, whose liberality to the Jews, during the great famine in the time of Claudius, shewed the advantage, Eusebius said, of conciliating the friendship of great men,—the travellers entered Jerusalem. Zambda, the bishop, was not at home; and while awaiting his return, Rutilius walked out to see the place with one of the deacons of the Church, who offered to bear him company.

Though not as yet a professed disciple of Christ, Rutilius found himself oppressed with unwonted awe, when he remembered that he was in the very city where those marvellous events had passed, of which

¹ Such a journey is described by St. Jerome (Ep. 86).

he had of late been hearing. His companion, though not seemingly a man of enthusiastic character, evidently participated in the same feeling. "This," he said, "is the soil which was trodden by the blessed feet of the world's Deliverer." They passed towards the spot where the great sacrifice, by which the sins of all generations of men were to be done away, was consummated. How strange, thought Rutilius, must have been the virtue of that suffering! And how does it remind us that there is a depth and a reality in sorrow, which the joys and pleasures of this world cannot attain! For worldly pleasure does not harmonise with the deep things of our spirit—rather they are at enmity with one another; but a sober and chastened view of life corresponds with our condition in this world, with its uncertainty, its unsatisfying character, the speedy approach of death and oblivion, the expectation of judgment, the hope of immortality. Even according to the rules of the highest philosophy, self-denial is the portal to tranquillity of spirit; but when I come here, and am reminded how the Son of God submitted to the unknown agonies of the cross, the vain objects of this world's attraction become not only insipid, but disgusting.

With these thoughts Rutilius approached the hill of Calvary. What was his surprise upon finding, as he drew nearer, that a statue,¹ which for some little

¹ This and other circumstances respecting Jerusalem are mentioned by St. Jerome (Ep. 49).

time he had seen on its summit, about the very place where the fatal cross had stood, was no other than that which was connected with the most impure, enervating, and unmanly thoughts. No figure which could have crowned the hill would have given him satisfaction. A simple cross, by leaving the most unrestricted range to his imagination, would have been the only thing which would not have grated upon his feelings. But with his memory full of the majestic struggle between the Lord of life and the powers of evil—when the great Representative of our ruined race, after submitting to those unimaginable sufferings, by which He purchased our redemption, at length bowed the head, and cried, "*It is finished!*"—when the reality of the conflict between the sensual and the spiritual nature was so clearly demonstrated, and a path opened for mankind to those exalted destinies from which they seemed to be for ever excluded;—with such thoughts pressing upon his mind, to have obtruded upon his senses the low and humiliating associations of mere earthly pleasure—to see a statue of Venus on the hill of Calvary,—his heart sickened at the spectacle. He felt ready to renounce all community of feeling with the votaries of such a goddess. His companion observed, and probably divined, his feelings.

"What wonder," he said, "that so many of our brethren abjure all indulgence of that sensual nature, which, if once allowed its influence, will intrude itself even into such a scene as this? Our Egyptian soli-

taries may outrage nature by shutting themselves up in caverns from the very sight of heaven, and denying their appetite its needful aliment; but how much fouler an outrage is this to the best feelings of the heart—to worship Venus on the Hill of the Passion! You have here,” he continued, turning to Rutilius, “the secret of Christian asceticism. It is not a mere sullenness against nature, or a proud belief in the merit of our actions, like the vain devotion of the Brahmins of India. But heathenism, on the one side, has polluted all creation with its low sensuality; and a suffering Deity, on the other, has exalted self-denial into an imitation of what is divine, till many a noble heart has been unable to make a compromise between the demands of his present being and the aspirations of his superior nature, and has renounced the common intercourse of life, as too contaminated for endurance. What men may do in some future state of the world, when the pollutions of the heathen are no longer so apparent, I know not; but while this fearful contrast abides, the world needs surely some great example, some splendid instance of self-denial, to convince men that the deep emotions of the heart cannot be stilled by the charms of sensuality.”

Rutilius next directed his steps to another eminence, which was crowned at top by a statue of Jupiter. Instead of the abrupt rocks, which were the predominant feature of the country, this hill appeared to consist of an accumulation of materials

which he judged to be of artificial construction. His guide confirmed his conjecture. "In the heart of this hill," he said, "we are assured that the tomb is situate which received the body of our Lord. This heap of earth renders it invisible; and the chief of heathen deities has his place above, as though mocking the ineffectual reverence of the followers of the Crucified. Well: let Jupiter look to it that he is not one day dethroned. He keeps his seat, indeed, in the lofty places of the world; but the secret influences, which are diffusing themselves through the depths of society, will one day be revealed, and then this hill likewise may discover its recesses."

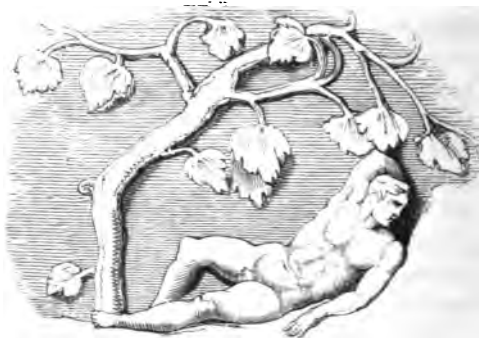
So, doubtless, thought many a Christian at that period, though hardly venturing to hope that the day would so soon come, when Helena, the wife of Constantius, at that time one of the reigning Cæsars, should clear away the ruins, and the idol image should give place to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

But at present there were no signs of such a change; and near the cave whence the First-born from the dead arose was a cemetery, where might be seen the cheerless memorials of pagan burial. Rutilius passed into it; and how gloomy seemed the urns in which the ashes of the dead were consigned, as was thought, to eternal rest,—and the lacrymatories, in which were stored the tears of those who had parted from them, as they supposed, for ever,—when he compared them with those better hopes which the adjoining tomb of the Arimathæan had

disclosed to mankind! He lingered for a few moments, perusing the inscriptions, in which children and parents, or those who had suffered a yet severer loss, had recorded their irretrievable deprivation; and which were often inscribed on what was meant to be a representation of those gates of Orcus, within which the dead were supposed to be committed to eternal repose. They were hung with garlands of roses, emblems of faded hopes; and inverted torches shewed that the flame of love was extinguished for ever. But a new scene greeted him, when he followed his guide into an adjoining enclosure, which was occupied by the Christians of the city. Greatly was he struck by the contrast. Here was grief, indeed, but not unmixed with consolation: the sense of loss, but not the murmur of discontent. He saw nothing which reminded him of the complaint of the Roman rhetorician, Quintilian, "I survive the loss of my two hopeful sons, as a token that there is no Providence."

The figures and paintings which adorned the more ornamented tombs were very different from those which were usual on the monuments of the heathen. One was so universally present, that he asked his guide to explain its meaning: a man was issuing from the mouth of a monstrous fish. "Did this," he inquired, "refer to the history of Jonah, and how was it connected with the recollection of the dead?" The explanation he received shewed him a singular part of the Christian system. The rever-





The foregoing are illustrations of the Story of Jonah, from the Cemetery of St. Agnes at Rome.

ence felt towards that divine Being, who had taken our nature, had prevented men from expressing His person by any ordinary representation. As He was never spoken of save with holy awe—as His sacraments were never celebrated except in privacy,—so neither was the appearance of His outward form displayed in such manner as should lead to familiarity. Rutilius could observe, therefore, that there was no picture of our Lord to be seen in the whole enclosure, but that the often-repeated figure of a shepherd, now watching his flock, now bringing a lamb home upon his shoulders, or sometimes bearing a cross, indicated the presence of Him who was never absent from the thoughts of Christians. On the same principle, when our Lord was set forth as the first begotten from the dead—the natural emblem on a Christian tomb—it was by the figure of Jonah, the prophetic emblem of His resurrection.

Rutilius's further inquiries were terminated by the entrance of Zambda, who had heard of his arrival, and wished to give him a letter with which he had been entrusted by Marcellus. "That good man," he said, "had been obliged to return to Egypt a few days before; but he had expressed an anxious desire to see his nephew, more especially since he had heard of the change which had taken place in his religious opinions." This was fully borne out by the letter, which expressed his uncle's urgent request that he would follow him to Egypt, accompanied by an intimation that he had an important statement to

make, which he should wish to communicate by word of mouth. Rutilius heard likewise from Zambda some particulars respecting the soldiers who had been admitted into the Christian community, while the detachment which Marcellus commanded had remained in Palestine ; and it was not very difficult to persuade him to rejoin his former comrades, whom he was assured that he should find assembled at Alexandria. The same guide who had attended him in Jerusalem offered to accompany him in his first day's journey.



The Gates of Orcus.

From the Antique.

CHAPTER XIV.

Prophecies respecting the Jews. Their Nation to be really looked for among the Converts to Christianity.

He shall redeem them one by one,
Where'er the world-encircling sun
Shall see them meekly kneel :
All that He asks on Israel's part,
Is only that the captive heart
Its woe and burden feel.

Christian Fear.

ON the following day Rutilius rode forth again from the gates of Jerusalem, taking the road which led to Bethlehem. "Is Zambda," he said to his guide, "of the ancient stock of this country, or is this distinction still kept up among your brethren?"

"Since the days of Adrian," replied his companion, "Palestine has been a forbidden soil to its former owners. No Jew could settle here, except he had renounced the distinctive peculiarities of his race; and those Christians who still retained them remained at Pella, where they fled from the arms of Titus. But since that time the distinction of the Jews as a nation has been understood to be ended. Their union was not national, but religious; and their connexion with all other members of the body of Christ has superseded any exclusive pre-eminence which they had as children of Abraham."

“ But do not early prophets foretell the restoration of Israel,” said Rutilius ; “ and does not your Apostle St. Paul say, that the whole nation will one day become Christian ?”

“ Yes, he does,” said the other ; “ but he nowhere says, that when converted it will retain its national distinction. On the contrary, he says that the birthright of the Israelites, as heirs of Abraham, passed to that portion of the nation which, in his own days, joined the Church of Christ. I, for instance, am myself descended by the female line from such a Jewish family. Now it is clear that the Prophets speak of Israel as though it were the chief and first of nations, and as though it inherited some peculiar privilege, which no other people in the world enjoyed. If this was designed to belong to that portion of the Israelites which still held together as a nation, then my family, and all which, like mine, have melted into the body of the Church, has lost its part of that pre-eminence which is promised by the ancient Prophets. For the vast mass of Jewish converts is no longer to be distinguished from Christians of other origin. This notion, then, would make that portion of the Jewish nation which St. Paul asserts to have exclusively inherited the promises of Abraham, to have been the only one which lost it. The error is very injurious ; for the opinion that the prophecies will still be fulfilled to their nation as a separate body, and that by holding together they will share in the promised grandeur of their

people, is what, more than aught besides, retains the Jews in their impenitence."

"What is the meaning, then, of those predictions," asked Rutilius, "which speak of the prosperity of Israel?"

"St. Paul has given us the interpretation of them," said his companion, "when he tells us that Jerusalem means the Church of God. And since the Jewish system has been overthrown by their exile from this land, in which only they could properly maintain it, his interpretation has been understood not only to be the true, but to be the *only* true meaning of that glorious name. It is but of late that our people have begun to bestow the name of Jerusalem at all upon this place, which, as you know, is commonly called *Ælia*. If the Jewish people had accepted our Lord's teaching, this city might perhaps have borne a different part in the new dispensation; the Jews might have been taught that their law had passed away in some manner less awful than by the destruction of their city and temple. Yet I have heard one learned man observe that there was a sort of providential order in the ruin which befel this city; for had it lasted, the natural honour paid to our Lord's earthly home might have produced for it a superstitious veneration. At present the metropolis of the Christian world is felt to be above, and no one city pretends to bear sway over her sister Churches."

While his companion spoke, they were looking

back upon the city-portal through which they had lately passed ; and Rutilius asked the meaning of a projection on the gate, which presented the unattractive figure of a vast sow.

“ Its object,” replied his companion, “ I can hardly tell you. The Roman founders of this city placed it there ; but whether as an insult to the former inhabitants of the place, or in connexion with their own superstition, I know not. They have certainly shewn, in many instances, that they took pleasure in testifying their contempt for what we consider sacred. I shewed you yesterday how they had crowned the hill of Calvary ; and the village of Bethlehem, by which we travel, where the Virgin-born saw the light, they have in like manner devoted to the impure rites of Adonis.”

Rutilius was glad to learn the remarkable circumstances of the places by which they passed. At Bethlehem he made some pause ; he saw the tomb of Rachel on the right hand, half way between it and Jerusalem ; and his companion did not leave him till evening, when he rested near Mamre, where the patriarch Abraham had so long sojourned : of this he saw a remarkable memorial—a tree of great age, and near it a painting of three persons, the central one the most distinguished, to which the inhabitants of the adjoining country were accustomed to offer sacrifices. At this place, his companion told him, numbers of persons from all the adjoining regions were accustomed to assemble, as well with a reli-

gious object, as for purposes of merchandise ; and the figures were no doubt the remains of an ancient tradition respecting the supernatural visitants of the patriarch.

Rutilius, now left to himself, accomplished his journey to Joppa as speedily as he could, and thence took ship for Alexandria.

CHAPTER XV.

The Meeting with Marcellus. The Discovery. The Confession.

And on his breast a bloody crosse he bore,
The dear remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweet sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead as living ever Him ador'd :
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,
For soveraigne hope which in His helpe he had.
Right, faithful, true, he was in deed and word ;
But of his cheere did seem too solemn sad ;
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.

Ævery Queen.

THOUGH the letter given by Zambda had contained but few particulars, yet Rutilius could not repress the conviction that it implied much more than it expressed. What could be the secret which his uncle designed to convey? During the leisure of his voyage his mind was actively engaged in scanning the different hypotheses which presented themselves to his imagination. Was it only his uncle's marriage to Flavia? Why should he, of all men, be summoned to attend it? Why had it been so long delayed? Did it connect itself with the apprehensions which the Christians began unceasingly to entertain from the well-known violence of Galerius?

Such thoughts chased one another through his mind as he came in view of the lofty pillar which had lately been erected at Alexandria in honour of Dioclesian (now called Pompey's Pillar). At ano-

ther moment, the sight of that ancient Nile,—on the banks of which Pythagoras and Plato had drunk in their secret learning, which had been famed in Grecian song from the days of Homer to those of Callimachus,—would have had charms enough for his imagination. But his mind was now too completely engrossed to leave any scope to his imagination. Without thinking of the greatness of Alexandria, of the fame of its founder, or of the wealthy kings who had made it the seat of learning and art, he landed, and speedily found himself in the dwelling of Marcellus. The centurion was wrapped in deep thought, and Flavia was at his side, when Rutilius entered.

“ You are just come in time,” said the centurion to him: “ I have been assured, on good evidence, that the catastrophe which I have been for some time expecting will take place to-morrow.”

He was about to continue, but was interrupted by Flavia, who sank fainting into his arms, exclaiming only, in a faint voice, “ My father!” Rutilius looked so surprised, that when she had recovered, and was able to leave the room, Marcellus could not refrain from saying: “ So you had never known how near a relation I have to thank you for rescuing from bondage; and you are come in time to render her further service. If I perish, as there is reason to expect, in the persecution which will probably break out to-morrow, I must trust to your care for consigning her to the charge of her mother’s kindred in Gaul. My marriage in that country I was bound,

by a promise to her uncle, to conceal : but I have lately heard that he, like his sister, has become a Christian, and if so, he will be anxious, by his kindness towards my niece, to atone for his persecution of her mother. To yourself also, if the report which I have heard respecting you be true, I would counsel a flight into the dominions of Constantius ; for I believe that he will not share in the cruelties which, ere long, will probably be inflicted on the Christians. It is well that you have not been formally admitted into the emperor's service ; for it will enable you to escape, at present, without compromising your new principles, and thus to act a second time as the guardian of my daughter."

The words of Marcellus threw light on so many circumstances heretofore inexplicable, that Rutilius stood for a time confounded, and could not muster words for a reply. Perhaps his uncle in part divined his feelings ; for, as though to relieve him, he went on to state some further points which he wished to communicate. Their intercourse was long and confidential ; and when Rutilius opened his own feelings, and told how strongly he was now inclined to the Christian faith, he found his uncle's confidence increase in a corresponding manner. At length he retired to rest ; but it was only an hour or two before military music, and the sound of rejoicing, called him up again, to take part in the joyful celebration of the emperor's birth-day. He woke with a sudden start, and was some time before he could well recall the new circumstances which the preceding night had

disclosed to him. Marcellus was already gone forth, when he descended from his room; and as Flavia had not left her apartment, he walked forth to witness the ceremonial of the day. After various military manœuvres, during which Rutilius found opportunities of conversing with several of his old associates, he followed the main body of soldiers into a large enclosure, which was set out for a public feast in honour of the day. Marcellus was in a conspicuous place, among those who were invited; and though a shade of sadness still sat upon his manly countenance, yet Rutilius was at a loss to account for the gloomy apprehensions which he had expressed. On a sudden, the chief military officer of the district, who presided on the occasion, arose and said, that it was the emperor's pleasure that all who served under his orders should join in sacrificing to the hereditary gods, by whose gift success in arms was bestowed. A dead silence ensued. At length one of the leading centurions arose, and drawing near to an altar which stood in a prominent position, in front of the whole assembly he proceeded to make the customary offering. He was followed by another. A third succeeded: a fourth, who, as Rutilius heard it whispered around him, was supposed to entertain in secret the new opinions, advanced, though with evident reluctance, and performed his part. What would Marcellus do? It came to his turn to make the declaration. All knew his principles; and when the tribune, who presided, turned towards him as the next in order, each man looked at his neighbour, and

every one's breath seemed to be suspended for a moment. "Now Marcellus," said the tribune, "I know how highly you are esteemed by our Cæsar Galerius; let us see, in return, that you rightly estimate your duty. Remember the preferments which await you, and that honour and trust are the consequence of faithful obedience."

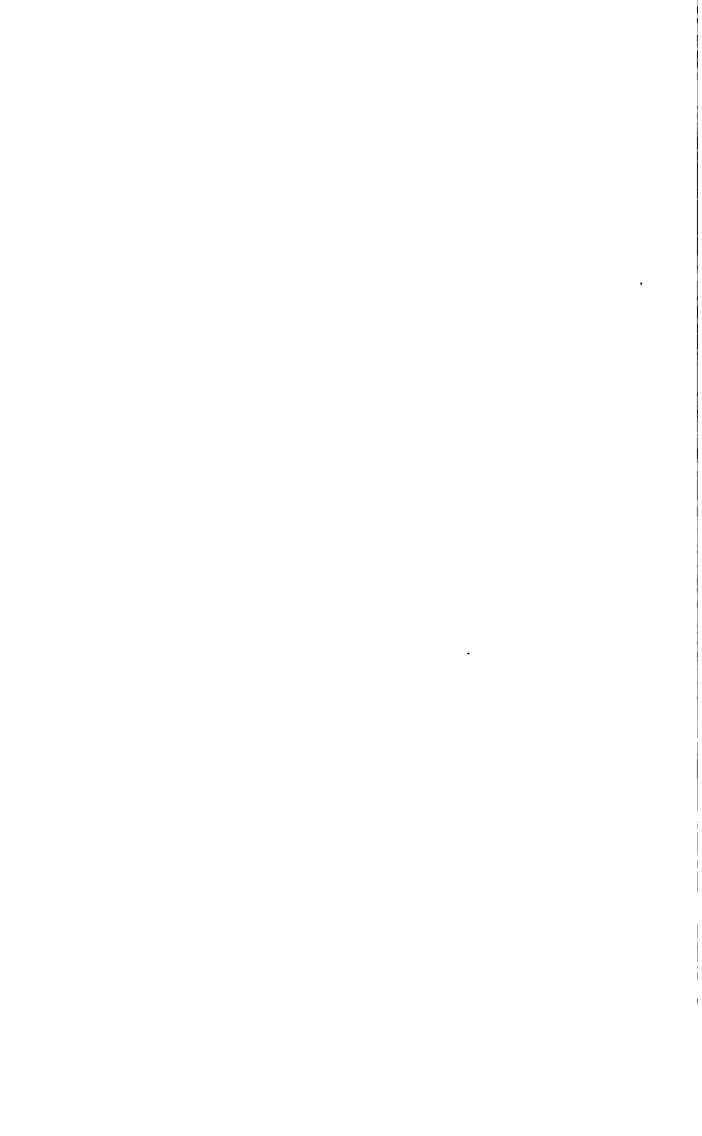
"I do indeed remember it," replied Marcellus, with an unhesitating voice; "I remember that I owe faithful obedience, as the soldier of Jesus Christ, my eternal King. For these badges of distinction," throwing down his arms, and the vine-branch, his ensign of office, "I renounce them. Your gods of wood and stone, deaf and dumb idols, I will not worship. If such is the condition of service, that those who fight for the emperor must worship his gods, I will no longer bear arms."

General consternation followed this avowal. The Christian soldiers—for many were present—looked as though they might be induced to take the centurion's part. But he surrendered himself at once to those whom the tribune ordered to lead him to the ward-room. His only words were addressed, in a low voice, to Rutilius, as he left the place, "To your care I leave Flavia."

The well-known circumstances which followed—the execution of this faithful soldier of Christ, and the general persecution which shortly ensued—are not subjects for this story. Those awful scenes of cruelty and of grace are too sacred for description. Neither were Rutilius and Flavia compelled for the present to

be further witnesses of such events : for as Rutilius had never been actually enrolled in the imperial army, and as the command to sacrifice extended at present to the military alone, he was allowed to depart without molestation; and thus had an opportunity of conducting Flavia to her relations in Gaul, who were living under the mild sway of Constantius. Even here, however, the alarm of persecution, after a time, extended itself. But the ordinary incidents of domestic life do not well harmonise with such heart-stirring events; and it is unnecessary therefore to say more than that Flavia was settled in her uncle's house, until she finally agreed to choose the partner of her former wanderings as her companion during the longer journey of life.





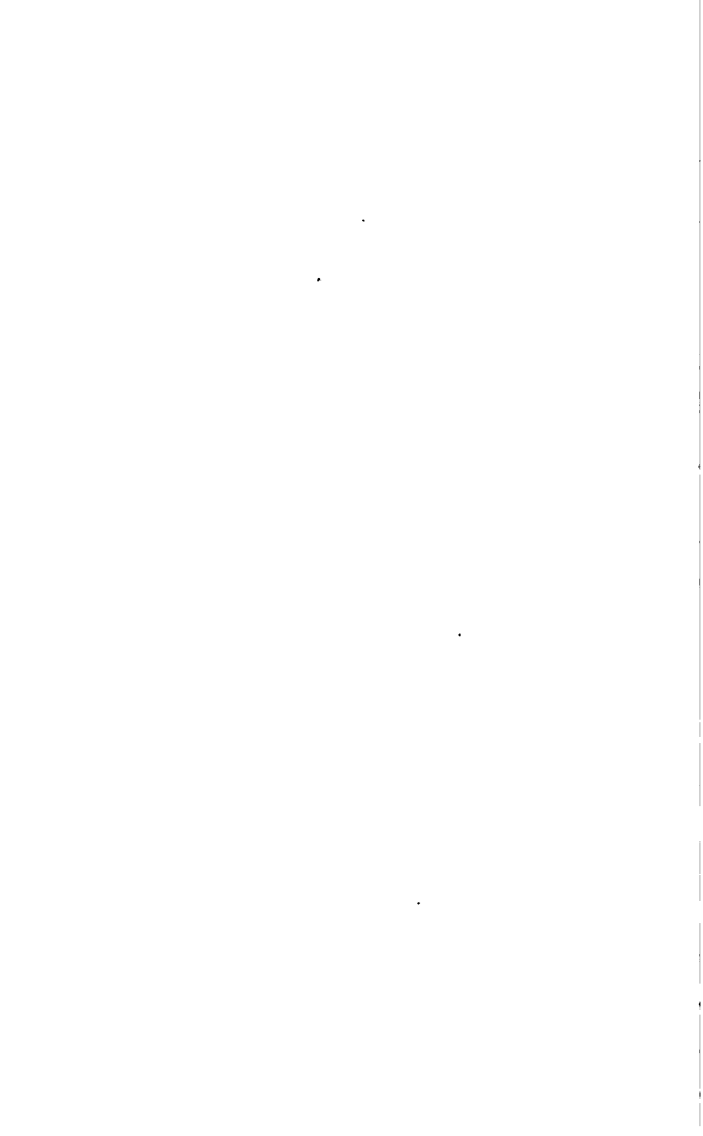
LUCIUS;

OR,

The Flight of Constantine.

The time of the following story is from A.D. 303 to A.D. 305.

The public incidents are principally drawn from *Laotantius de Morte Persecutorum*.





Rome as a Goddess. From the Antique.

CHAPTER I.

The Arrival.

Tell me what brings you, gentle youth, to Rome?
Story of St. Philip Neri.

“OF all people in the world, said old Herodotus, the inhabitants of Ionia have to be thankful for the fairest sky and most delicious seasons.” Such was

the remark of Lucius, as he was joined by the captain of the small ship in which he was, for the first time, approaching the coasts of Asia. His companion had walked to the prow of the vessel, where Lucius had long been standing, and seemed to be calculating whether the wind, which was bearing them quickly towards the mouth of the Hellespont, would take them through it. The headlands of Mount Ida began to get more clear as the high ground of Samothrace was melting away to the north-west. The captain's thoughts were entirely directed to the discharge of his cargo on the shore of the adjoining Propontis :

As when a pilot from among the Cyclades,
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
A cloudy spot, down thither prone in flight
He speeds.

He gave little encouragement, therefore, to the remark of the young Briton, for such Lucius was. "Nay, Master Lucius, I am too busy to-day to think of any of your old-world stories. I suppose you would have me tell you, as when we were in that stormy weather off Zacynthus, what was the name of every headland. You put me beyond patience, when you would tell me about your old poet, with his

'Thy woods, Zacynthus, from the deep appear ;'

and about the voyagers who, going too near the shore, heard the wood-nymphs proclaim that 'Pan the great is dead.'"

"The last story I don't vouch for," answered

Lucius, with a laugh, "however Plutarch may ; but you, an Italian, and from Campania too,—it is a shame that you should not know your own poet Virgil. However, such a fine day as to-day, you may well find time to tell me what these places are which we are approaching."

"I know more about the wines of Campania, which I hope to deliver to-morrow in the harbour of Nicomedia," said his rough companion, "than about any of your poets ; and I am too busy in calculating how we shall get through this narrow channel of the Hellespont to think of any thing else to-day."

Lucius knew by experience that nothing more could be got from his unsociable companion ; and wondering in himself at the little interest which was felt by their own countrymen in those great spirits with whom from childhood he had held familiar intercourse, he turned away to make out what he could by his own observations. Here was, no doubt, the plain of Troy on his right hand, where the petty events of a border contest had been enrolled by imperishable genius among the unfailing records of mankind. Further on, the town of Sestos, on the European shore of the Chersonese, reminded him of the insane ambition of Xerxes. Right across, where the free waves were now covered with bounding vessels, had been stretched that vast chain of boats over which the human stream had been driven for five days and nights incessantly. How marvellous that, from the very limits of India, men and animals

should thus be poured over this wide channel for the subjugation of another continent! He saw, at a glance, what had often surprised him in the descriptions of Homer, why the Hellespont is called broad. As a sea, it is nearly the most narrow of any; but regarded as a river, and such it looks to those who see it, its width is one of its striking characteristics.

“And now,” thought Lucius, “all this power of Persia is passed away, and that of Greece, which followed it; and I come from the distant woods of Britain to seek my fortune in the capital of another empire. How strangely does the whole course of the world seem to be gathered together in a point, when we think of those few powers which have ruled in it; and none mightier or more extended than this, which sways in this distant East, and yet holds in subjection my countrymen, of whom Virgil wrote, but in the time of Augustus—

‘The Briton, from the mighty world withdrawn!’”

Such thoughts led the young man towards the consideration of his own fortunes; and as he passed the rich cities on the Asiatic shore, and saw their lights beaming over the waters, long after nightfall, the well-known feeling came over him, that in all this tide of life there was nothing which had sympathy with him; and that if the little trader which had brought him from Ostia were that night to sink in the waves, his fate would be as little heeded by all

around him as the bursting of one of the bubbles which were gleaming in the wake of the vessel.

"Why is it," he thought, "that Heaven has given us this deep-seated desire to live in the hearts of others—this earnest striving after an eternal being, if this cold, selfish, fleeting world is gradually to chill and starve us into apathy? Must we be contented to pass away, like the mighty powers which have ruled in turn over this celebrated shore? Yet their names and fate live in history,—the fate of such as I am is to be forgotten."

This feeling of desertion, which Lucius had never known while still at a distance from the capital where he was to seek his fortunes, recalled to his thoughts what he had often heard from a cousin, of about his own age, who had been brought up a Christian. "Can it be true," he said to himself, "as Paulus used to tell me, that, go where they will, these Christians are treated at once as brethren? Their hope of a future world, and their firm conviction that every one has his individual share in it, must needs be a great comfort to those who are able to believe it; but this present community of feeling is a means of putting at once to the test what is the reality of their profession. Though not a Christian myself, yet the letter which my cousin got for me, from the Bishop of York to the Bishop of Nicomedia, will enable me to learn how far this feeling of theirs goes."

Lucius had met at Capua with a philosopher named Securus, who had told him that the Christian

bishop would take no notice at all of him, unless he was in a condition to make some return for his kindness. Securus had instanced his own philosophy. "I hold," he said, "the tenets of the Academics; just as your friend, who gave you this letter, does those of the Christians. Each is a kind of philosophy,—a set of opinions. But when I visit a new country, I meet with no kindness from persons who agree with me, unless they think my company pleasant or advantageous. Why should the Christians act differently from other men?" Lucius had thought, at the time, that the philosopher spoke reasonably; but, in the want of some one to sympathise with him, he opened his papers to look at the letter, which had been given open, with a permission to peruse its contents. The Bishop of York, from whom it came, seemed to have no personal knowledge of the Nicomedian bishop: it was addressed—

"To the Lord Bishop Anthimus, our holy Brother, with whom we are joined in one soul.¹

"Though unknown to me in the flesh, my dear brother in Christ Jesus, yet your hallowed labours have long made me regard you as known; and though absent in body, yet in spirit have I discerned you. It is with satisfaction, therefore, that by letter, at least, I can send you this familiar and brotherly address. Nor is it strange if, though absent, we seem to be near one another, and, though unknown, to have

¹ The introduction of this letter is imitated from one addressed to St. Augustine, § 30.

a close acquaintance, seeing that we are members of one body; that we have, as St. Paul speaks, one common Head; that we are imbued with one common gift of grace; that one bread supports us both; that we walk in one way, and inhabit that one house of Christ's Church Catholic, in which all the brethren are dwellers. Finally, whereunto we have already attained, we press on, with whatsoever of faith and hope has been our present succour, that we may enter further into the same great reality; not outwardly merely, but in spirit do we seek to appreciate that blessed unity of the Church, separate from which we should be nothing."

The letter then proceeded to state, that though the bearer was not a Christian, and not entitled, therefore, to those commendatory letters which were uniformly given by the bishop of every city to such members of his flock as visited foreign countries, yet that as a friend and relative of Christians, and as not indisposed, at least not violently opposed, to their principles, he was recommended to the prayers and good offices of the bishop in whose diocese he was about to dwell. "Perhaps," it was added, "when this youth discerns what unity and affection there is between the most distant members of the Christian commonwealth—how they make up one family—how their participation in one holy communion renders them a single body throughout the world,—he may discern that this is the true supply of that want

of our nature which none are more likely to estimate than strangers in a foreign country."

Lucius was struck with a sentiment which harmonised so well with his own feelings; and the reverent look of the bishop, whom he had often seen in his native town of York, with many a cherished train of home-associations, mingled with his dreams long after the little trader which bore him had emerged from the narrow Hellespont, and entered the more open bosom of the Propontis.

When Lucius rose next morning, he found that the fine weather and the prosperous wind, promising a speedy termination of their voyage, had produced an effect even upon the sullen nature of the captain. He pointed out where lay Byzantium and Chalcedon to the north, between which opened the passage into that dark and turbulent Euxine, of which he spoke with no little horror; and when at length they approached Nicomedia, he seemed as though he could never dwell enough upon its objects of interest.

The situation of the place was sufficiently lovely. The sun was fast declining as the vessel neared the shore; and while the buildings in the higher part of the town were still lighted up by its refulgence, a calm depth of shadow brooded over the great mass of palaces, which mounted in regular steps up the side of the semicircular hill which enclosed the place. In front lay the sea, now perfectly placid, as though the whole scene had been raised as an amphitheatre,

where the giant race of fable might witness some of those aquatic exhibitions which were still displayed in the Coliseum, before the admiring populace of Rome. The houses had none of that variety which results from the varying wants of rich and poor,—no paltry hovels alternating with the porticoes of the great: the place bore marks of having grown up at the call of the reigning emperor, and of the bulk and magnificence of his designs. Yet the architecture shewed that the purity of ancient taste had been superseded by a pompous extravagance. Buildings were poor and defective in their individual proportions, which were massive and imposing in their general effect; and to a close observer, the new capital which Dioclesian had built for the Roman empire might have seemed an indication of the general restoration which he had attempted in its policy. Increased show; the adoption of eastern manners and maxims; the division of the imperial power among four chiefs, who were mutually to aid one another; the transfer of the seat of government to a place midway between the European and Asiatic provinces,—all seemed to indicate some grand designs; but they shewed, in truth, that the Thracian soldiers, whom circumstances had at this time made lords of the Roman world, knew little of the principles by which the power of the empire had been built up and cemented. The unity of Roman domination, its especial connexion with that city, which had so long swayed the earth, the fated superiority of the eternal name,—

all these were henceforth forgotten. Thus did God's providence prepare the way for bringing forth that new principle of unity which was already leavening the earth.

Such thoughts, however, would at that time have seemed premature, even to the Christian spectator ; still less could they be looked for in the two persons who, from the deck of their small vessel, were enjoying the calmness of this beautiful evening. As the wind had now nearly sunk, they scarcely moved through the water ; and they did not reach the land till the moon had risen upon them, and cast her light, first on the splendid temples at the summit of the hill before them ; then on the palace, which lay in its centre ; and, at last, on the beach towards which they were tending.

The captain, who, notwithstanding his roughness of manner, had begun to take considerable interest in his passenger, was asking what prospects he had at Nicomedia, and whether he had brought introductions with him. " The letter which you say you have from the Cæsar Constantius to his son Constantine will no doubt be of great use to you. He is well thought of by the soldiers, and in much favour with the emperor Dioclesian himself."

" Besides this," said Lucius, " I have an introduction from a near relation to Dorotheus, who, I believe, is one of the emperor's chamberlains. There has long been an intimacy, and, I believe, some connexion between them. This prospect was the pecu-

liar inducement with my friends for sending me on so distant a journey."

"If you can interest Dorotheus for you," said his companion, "you may, no doubt, make your fortune speedily. They say that no one has the emperor's ear more completely. Have you brought any other letters?"

"I have one to Anthimus, the bishop of the Christians."

"If what they talk of in Italy is true," said the other, "that will do you no great good, if it comes to the emperor's ears."

"Why! what do they expect?"

"When you land at Nicomedia," said the captain, "you will hear enough about it; and here comes the boat which is to convey us on shore."

A kindly leave ended their short acquaintance; not without a promise, on the part of the young Briton, that he would visit his seafaring friend, if he could find opportunity. The trader went to seek the merchant to whom his cargo was consigned, and Lucius inquired the road which led to the palace.

CHAPTER II.

The Palace.

The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
Empires and monarchs, and their radiant courts—
Best school of best experience, quickest insight,
In all things that to greatest actions lead.

Paradise Regained.

THE interior of Dioclesian's palace was fitted to increase the awe and admiration which his power created among all the innumerable subjects of his empire. Lucius, who had never seen a greater man than the governor of York, was amazed at the size of the palace-courts, at the number of soldiers who filled them, at the crowd of attendants who were moving in every direction, as well as at the magnificence of the porticoes, and the beauty of the statues which ornamented the building. Both in the palace, however, and in the streets through which he passed to it, he had been struck by a degree of hurry and anxiety, which he was disposed to attribute to his own unacquaintance with such scenes.

But when he was introduced to Dorotheus, he could not help feeling, notwithstanding the general kindness with which he was received, that the emperor's favourite seemed to share the common in-

quietude, and that something of moment was at hand. Indeed, Dorotheus told him that he was arrived at an anxious moment; that he hoped he might derive advantage from his journey, but that, at the present time, all things were in peculiar uncertainty. A friend came in while he was with the chamberlain, and began to whisper Dorotheus, in a low voice, that the messenger had returned from Miletus, and that the answer which he brought was supposed to be of an unpleasant kind. Their further conversation was cut short by the entrance of a young man, of about Lucius' own age, to whose care Dorotheus committed him, stating that in a few days he should be placed in some situation in the imperial service. Till that time, it was arranged that Gallus,—such was the young man's name,—should allow him to share the apartment which he himself occupied in the palace.

The friend from whom he brought introductions had prepared him to find Dorotheus a Christian; this circumstance, perhaps, induced Gallus to inquire, so soon as they left the chamberlain's presence, whether he was himself of that body.

‘I am not,’ he answered; ‘but why should you take the trouble of asking the religion of a stranger?’

‘You know, I suppose,’ said Gallus, ‘how much interest the subject creates at present.’

‘I am just from a long voyage, and am ignorant what is passing.’

‘Has nothing travelled abroad, then, respecting

those secret discussions which the emperors have been holding all winter long, and which have created so much alarm in this place? Though, like you, no Christian myself, I have friends among them, and am interested for their safety."

This, then, Lucius found, was the cause of the anxiety he had witnessed. On further inquiry, he was told that throughout the winter the emperor Dioclesian and his son-in-law, the Cæsar Galerius, had been continually shut up together in secret. Something was evidently in preparation; and the mother of Galerius had uttered expressions which had alarmed the Christians. She was addicted to various superstitious rites, and attributed her elevation from her original state, as the wife of a Dacian peasant, to the favour of the gods of her native woods and mountains. To them she held feasts at the very time when the Christian members of her household were celebrating their Lent-fast before the time of Easter. Her anger had been particularly excited by their refusing to partake in her festivities.

When the emperors had completed their private deliberations, it was known that a council of officers had been held; and since that time a message had been sent to the oracle of Apollo at Miletus. "Putting all things together," Gallus said, "the Christian population of Nicomedia was in a state of great anxiety, and anticipated some diminution of their privileges, if not the actual breaking out of a fresh persecution." And considering how great was Dio-

clesian's power, and that he had evidently the purpose of placing all the institutions of the empire upon a new and more firm foundation, they feared lest, if once resolved to injure them, he should aim at their complete extermination. Galerius they knew was their enemy,—for he it was who had directed the persecution against the Christian soldiers five years before; but Dioclesian's was a milder nature, and they had been allowed to build a handsome church in one of the most conspicuous situations in his new capital.

Lucius discussed these matters with Gallus for some hours on the following day. Nor did he forget the other letters with which he was charged. But Constantine, he found, was absent from Nicomedia; and as Anthimus was engaged in public worship, he was requested to call on him early next morning.

Every day seemed to increase the expectation of an approaching storm. People asked, when they met one another, whether any thing had yet come of those secret discussions. All that was known was, that fresh troops had arrived. "So ends the twenty-second of February," said Gallus to his comrade, as they retired for the night. "To-morrow is the Terminalia; I suppose you will go and see the ceremonies. I should not wonder if the emperor was to make it the day for entering on some new attempt. Old Terminus was always a limit both ways—the place where the new and old world parted."

"I have promised to call very early on Anthi-

mus," said the young Briton, "and he is constantly occupied from the time he goes to his worship ; but I will join you afterwards."

The earliest dawn found Lucius on his way to the house of Anthimus, which was near the Christian church, at the summit of the town. To his surprise he found the street already thronged with soldiers. As they were standing perfectly still, though under arms, Lucius passed them, and ascended as far as the Christian church, which lay somewhat in front of the bishop's dwelling. But scarcely had he got so far, when he heard an evident stir among the soldiery in the street below him, though the light was as yet so faint, that he could not discern its purpose. Curious to see what they were doing at so unusual an hour, he climbed up a flight of steps which led him to a raised terrace in front of the western end of the church. The principal door appeared to be on that side, which commanded a view down one of the main streets of the town. Having ascended the terrace, he posted himself at the balustrade which ran along its western edge, just above where the main street, dividing itself into two smaller outlets, formed an opening on each side of the church. And now he could see distinctly that the whole body of soldiers were coming directly towards him. They must clearly be intending, he thought, to pass along one or both the streets which ran by this terrace ; and he might as well remain here,—for in narrow places it is ill jostling with such rude passengers. He sat down,

therefore, in a low seat, which was so hidden in the balustrade as completely to conceal him.

The first ranks passed quickly on, dividing right and left, as they came up; and Lucius was expecting that the tide would soon flow by, when he heard a party begin to ascend the steps by which he had himself mounted. "Is it to surprise the Christian church," he thought, "that this early march is intended? If so, I shall see, at all events, whether there is any thing hidden in those places, which they guard with so much care from the intrusion of strangers." The notion prevailed so commonly, that the Christians had some secret object of worship of a hideous kind, with which none but the initiated were acquainted, that it was with as much interest as surprise that the young Briton now saw the soldiers approach the main gates of the church with the evident intention of bursting them open. They were fast closed, the hour of early worship not naving yet arrived. Their strong materials, the stoutest timber from the neighbouring forests of Thrace, were bolted together with great iron bars. For a time the heavy strokes which four or five soldiers gave them with sledge-hammers had no other effect than to attract a crowd from the neighbouring streets. But in a few minutes a person who seemed to be the tribune in command ascended the steps, followed by soldiers who carried one of those engines which the Romans employed in the siege of cities. No sooner

was it placed close to the folding-doors and plied by levers, than they began visibly to shake, and a moment after flew open, with such violence as to be torn from their hinges. Instantly a crowd of soldiers rushed in. The building was empty ; but all its furniture was ransacked and destroyed in a moment. A balustrade which ran across the middle of the building was beaten down. The altar, which stood near the eastern wall, then became visible. It had at first been hidden by curtains which hung from the balustrade ; and it was here apparently that the soldiers expected to find some image or object for which they were seeking. Lucius, who could see what was passing within, was sufficiently acquainted with the construction of a church to know that this was the part to which strangers were not commonly admitted ; but he had now a proof that they were not actuated by any superstitious regard for a concealed image, but only by a natural reverence for that place which was reserved for the more special worship of the unseen God.

The soldiers, however, were only the more exasperated at discovering nothing. They overthrew the altar ; the candlesticks they broke to pieces ; the benches in the centre of the building, and the ambos, or raised stands, whence the Scriptures were read to the people, they beat down ; they burnt the rolls on which the Scripture was written ; they broke open and pillaged the sacristy ; — five minutes after the doors

were burst, the whole interior was a ruin. Meanwhile the tribune in command was standing in front of the building, and seemed to hesitate in what way to destroy it. Lucius, who was very near him, could see him make signs to a party which was now visible on a turret in the palace. They were evidently observing what passed, as the church was in so commanding a position as to be seen from the whole town. From the situation of the turret, they manifestly came from the apartments of the emperor himself. At first the tribune seemed to intend to fire the building; but, at a signal from the party on the palace, he desisted, perhaps lest the flames should spread into other quarters; and after a short pause, a body of engineers marched up, who carried with them tools for its destruction. Lucius saw the work begin; but the crowd having now ascended the steps, he was able to mingle with it unperceived; and it being evidently no time for his intended visit, he returned to his quarters in the palace.

"Well," said Gallus, when they met, "so old Terminus has made a day of it, as I expected."

"Is Dorotheus much discomposed?" asked the Briton.

"He will be happy, if this is all that is designed," said the other; "I see he looks on this as only the commencement."

Nothing more passed that day; but the next morning, when the two young men were walking out through the main square of the city, they were at-

tracted by a vast crowd, to which a new edict from the emperor was exhibited. They got near enough to read its contents.

"It is as I expected," said Gallus; "all men are publicly warned against professing themselves Christians; those who do so are declared incapable of office or honour, are put out of the protection of the law, and threatened with punishment."

Scarcely had Gallus spoken, when a man who was nearest to the place where the edict was exhibited, climbed up upon a railing, and cried out aloud, "Is this a triumph over the Goths or Sarmatians which you are assembling us to proclaim?"—at the same time tearing down the emperor's edict from the place to which it was affixed. The man was well dressed, and evidently belonged to the higher ranks; but he made no opposition when a body of soldiers rushed up and seized him. Lucius understood afterwards that he was put immediately to a cruel death; but he did not witness what passed; for Gallus, who was afraid of a commotion, drew him off, and they returned to the palace.

If it was from the Christians that Gallus apprehended disturbance, his fears were unfounded. Though very numerous in Nicomedia, as well as throughout the neighbourhood, they offered no opposition. The tearing down of the edict they condemned, as indicating a wish to create a popular disturbance. In short, it seemed towards evening as though matters were likely to go off quietly

enough ; and Lucius could see that Dorotheus had his hopes that, though somewhat circumscribed in their privileges, and compelled to worship in greater privacy, yet that the Christians would not suffer more from this edict than from many which had previously been pronounced against them, and that the emperor's wrath would be allayed by their peaceable submission.

In this expectation, Lucius and his friend Gallus, whose success in the emperor's court depended much on the influence of Dorotheus, passed the evening more cheerfully than for some time, and continued in conversation till a late hour. The night was dark and stormy. Before going to bed, Lucius looked forth, and occasional flashes of lightning shewed him the vast pile of building which lay opposite to that part of the palace where he was himself stationed. It was appropriated to the household of Galerius ; while that in which he himself was standing connected with the apartments of Dioclesian. By one of these occasional flashes, he could see a considerable number of persons coming across towards his own portion of the building.

Gallus, to whom he mentioned what he saw, took little notice of it. The palace-gates, he said, were watched ; and these were only some late revellers returning from the quarters of Galerius.

At length Lucius lay down, but not to sleep. The strange scene he had witnessed the day before—the decree of the morning—the influence it might

have on his own fortunes,—these subjects long disturbed his rest. At length he slept; but still the same thoughts returned and mixed with the tempest, which was raging without. The men whom he had seen in the palace-court were rushing on, he thought, as the soldiers had done the day before. His own room was the point at which they were attacking the palace. Now they were firing it, as the tribune had prepared to do the church. In an instant the flames seemed to burst up before him—it was the lightning which was flashing across the sky. He woke up. It could not be lightning, for the glare continued. And now he smelt the smoke. It must be so. The palace was on fire. He sprung up. Gallus was roused in a moment. The alarm was given without. He thought he saw some persons hurrying away towards the quarters of Galerius. Perhaps they were gone to procure help. In a few minutes a large body of soldiers were assembled in the square of the palace. The fire, which had threatened at first to consume the whole building, was got under, after consuming a considerable number of rooms, and amongst them that which Lucius had occupied. He had only time to dress himself, when the fire drove him forth, leaving every thing which he had with him to be destroyed.

The next day was a melancholy time to Lucius. The little money which he had brought with him from home had been expended, so soon as he reached Nicomedia, on such clothes as were wanted for the

palace. All these, except a single suit, had perished in the conflagration. His papers and letters had also been destroyed. And what made matters worse, his patron Dorotheus, who might easily have made up these losses, was not likely to have the power of rendering any further assistance. Popular rumour attributed the fire to the Christians. They took that way, it was said, to express their discontent. The emperor publicly declared that all his household should shew that they worshipped the ancient gods. From a hiding-place in the palace, to which Gallus had conducted him, Lucius could see an altar raised in a conspicuous place, to which the empress Prisca and the princess royal Valeria were obliged publicly to approach and offer sacrifices. They were known, Gallus said, to favour the Christians; and their manner shewed how unwillingly they performed their part.

After them the officers of the household were ordered to give the same test of submission. The emperor declared that he would inflict the most cruel punishment on those who refused. Already preparations were made for atrocities at which the heart revolted. Instruments of torture were brought forth; and the ferocious beings by whom it was wont to be inflicted seemed as if they were already gloating over the agonies of their victims. On the other side stood various persons who were known to be Christians, and some on whose countenances might be read a steady look of unconquerable resolution. Dorotheus

would certainly not submit. And though neither Lucius nor Gallus would themselves have objected to sacrifice, yet they were liable to be accused of setting fire to the palace. This charge Galerius made against all the attendants of the Christian chamberlain; and he was himself conducting the inquiry with the greatest cruelty. Lucius could not help supposing afterwards, that the event had been brought about by his own emissaries; especially when, a fortnight later, he heard that a second fire had broken out. Some, indeed, referred it to the lightning; but he remembered that the persons whom he had seen coming just before the fire were evidently crossing from the quarters of Galerius. These were later thoughts. At present the two young men were occupied only with the best means of escape. Lucius would gladly have returned home; but his money was expended. He was disgusted at the cruelty of the punishment, which he was told had been inflicted on the poor man the day before, who, it was said, had been burnt to death, and at the threats, which the emperor had just uttered, of similar punishments against the Christians. At all events, he was resolved to quit the palace, and not witness the cruel scenes which were about to pass there. He asked Gallus, who was resolved at every hazard to remain, and run the risk of procuring another protector, to guide him out of the place. Gallus, whose long service gave him a knowledge of all the recesses of the palace, conducted him by a secret

passage which led close to the emperor's own apartment, and then let him out by a little postern.

"No one," said Gallus, "knows this passage, save my master Dorotheus and myself. See you keep my secret."

He shut the door; and Lucius was once more walking a solitary man in the streets of Nicomedia.

CHAPTER III.

The Encounter.

Him in a narrow place he overtook,
And fierce assailing forc'd him turn again :
Sternely he turn'd again, when he him strooke
With his sharp steel, and ran at him amain
With open mouth, that seemed to contain
A full good pecke within the utmost brim,
All set with iron teeth in raunges twain,
That terrified his foes, and armed him,
Appearing like the mouth of Orcus' grisly grim.

But Caledore, thereof no whit afraid,
Rencountered him with so impetuous might,
That th' outrage of his violence he staid,
And bet aback, threatening in vain to bite,
And spitting forth the poison of his spight,
That foamed all about his bloody jawes,
Though rearing up his former feet on hight,
He ramp'd upon him with his ravenous pawes,
As if he would have rent him with his cruel claws.

Faery Queen.

WHEN Lucius left the palace he walked on for a time, scarcely heeding in what direction he went. The preparations which he had beheld, the scenes which he expected, swallowed up his thoughts. It might have been long before he recovered himself, had he not been hailed in a rough voice—

“ Master Lucius, how go your prospects at the palace ? ”

He turned round, and saw the coarse but friendly

features of the captain with whom he had come to Nicomedia. The sight nearly overcame him. With difficulty could he state what had happened. The blunt sailor listened with interest.

"If my vessel were ready for sea," he said, "I would take you back to-morrow for nothing; but it will be a month or more before my cargo is collected, and in the meanwhile the ship is laid up in dock."

"I scarce know where to go," said Lucius—"for my letter to Constantine was burnt in the palace—unless it be to the bishop of the Christians."

"That is not the safest of places just now," said the sailor; "but it may do for a while; and when my ship is ready, you shall be welcome to a passage back to Ostia."

Lucius thanked his rough companion; and though he remembered that for a pennyless man it was a long journey from Italy to Britain, he felt the gloom of his prospects somewhat abated. But how to bestow himself in the meantime? He determined to have recourse to Anthimus, and to try how far the charity of a Christian would extend itself.

A second time, therefore, he was at the house of Anthimus, who now happily was at home. He was shewn into the presence of a reverend-looking man of advanced age, whose countenance, displaying a blended look of kindness and of sorrow, at once affected and encouraged him.

"What want you, young man, with me?" said

the bishop : " from your dress, you seem to come from the palace. Are you the bearer of any order from the emperor?—you will find me as little disposed to resist as to fly."

Lucius hastened to declare that he was himself a fugitive.

" You come, my son, but to a poor place of refuge."

The young man, thus encouraged, told his tale, and that he was the bearer of a letter from the Bishop of York, which he had lost in the fire of the preceding night. Already, he said, he had been up to deliver it. Anthimus shewed deep interest in the fortunes of the Church in Britain.

" I would," he said, " that we could live with the same confidence here, which prevails under the mild sway of Constantius; but *the Lord reigneth*. My office, young man," he concluded at last, " is to shew hospitality to all men; and though not one of our own Christian family, yet you are welcome to such as I can give, and while I have it to bestow."

They were interrupted by a person who came to entreat the bishop that he might that day be admitted to the Holy Communion.

" You were publicly convicted," said the bishop, " of adultery only half a year ago; the sentence of our fathers, by which you would have been excluded from the Holy Communion during seven years, was shortened to three years, on your giving signs of a sincere repentance. For three years only are

you to continue with those without the church in daily fasting and penitence. This is for your own benefit, as well as for the sake of example; for if you were allowed at once to approach the holy table, you would be in danger of coming with a carelessness, which would increase your guilt. You need some severe lesson to remind you of the greatness of your crime. What reason, then, can you give why you should be admitted so early to absolution?"

The penitent pleaded the danger of the times—the probability of a persecution—that he might be cut off without the sign of forgiveness or the bread of life.

"So much," said the bishop, "I am ready to allow, that in case of sickness or danger, any priest may reconcile you to the Church. But times of persecution are rather fitted to increase than to relax the rigour of discipline. For, whence comes this visitation upon us, but because our discipline has been allowed to languish? Is not God calling us by it to an increased watchfulness? Has He not sent this judgment upon us because our love has grown cold? Look at the times of our fathers, and you will find that it has always been when the Christian body has been exercised with the greatest outward trials that its inward life has been most vigorous and entire."

Lucius was surprised to find, from the rest of the conversation, that the man who was thus rejected was a person of wealth and influence, who voluntarily submitted to stand at the door of the Christian

church when the more favoured worshippers entered into it.

Anthimus took occasion from this circumstance to acquaint him that, as a heathen, he could not consider him as a part of his family, or allow him to share its daily worship—unless, indeed, he was willing to become a catechumen, and to prepare himself for baptism; but that he might continue to live under his roof, “so long,” said the old man, “as it pleases God to leave me one.” Here, therefore, Lucius resolved to continue till an opportunity should offer for rejoining his friends.

To dissipate the unpleasant thoughts to which his situation gave occasion, Lucius determined next morning to explore the adjoining coast. He set off with the earliest dawn; and, depressed and agitated as he felt from the failure of all his hopes, he had no sooner cleared the town, and begun to breathe the balmy air of the adjacent hills, than his youthful spirits revived. The novelty of all that he saw round him—the singular dress of the peasants—the magnificence of the buildings which were yet visible—kept him in perpetual delight. Never having left home before, and having derived all his knowledge from books, every object which he now beheld seemed to present to him a new phase of life. He pictured to himself the pleasure with which he should recall these distant scenes when he was again settled in the quiet simplicity of some British dwelling.

With these thoughts he walked on, determining

to reach an elevated brow, which stood prominently forth among the woods which he had now entered. He had brought with him sufficient provisions for the day; so that it was needless to turn back till the sun had passed its zenith. But as he advanced, the way became more difficult, till at last he found himself completely brought to a stand by a wall of rocks which ran through a wild part of the forest. It was evidently a natural barrier which opposed him; and yet there was some appearance that it had been strengthened by human art. In one or two places, where he thought he might find a passage, it seemed as if ravines had been blocked up by artificial means. At length, however, by climbing into the top branches of a tree which grew adjacent to the rocks, he reached their summit. The view on the other side convinced him that he had trespassed upon one of those extensive enclosures which the habits of the East reserved as hunting-places for the emperor. Before him lay an open lawn of grass, interspersed with occasional clumps of trees, on which deer of various sorts were feeding, with buffaloes and other animals, which were quite new to him. Beyond, a most beautiful prospect opened itself,—the high land which he had before seen, rising abruptly at its conclusion out of a dark forest. The whole space before him, from the mountains on the one side to the sea on the other, had no signs of being inhabited, though the villages which crowned various wooded promontories which he saw projecting into the sea, on his left hand,

shewed how populous was the adjoining neighbourhood. But this was beyond the limits of the royal chase, which ended in a bay at a few hundred yards from him, where the rocks on which he was standing descended sheer into the water from a great height. Lucius made his way for a short distance along their summit; but he was soon brought to a stand, at a point where a small village, divided from him only by a deep but narrow inlet, presented a most attractive halting-place.

As no boat was in sight, and he did not feel disposed to swim over without occasion, he sat down upon the rocks to make his repast on the provisions he had brought with him. While doing so, his attention was roused by a noise in an arched part of the rock beneath him. He knew that in these royal parks wild beasts were kept, as well as smaller game; and descending the rock half-way, he could see, as he expected, that the den in which a lion was secured, lay underneath him. It was a favourable opportunity for watching the habits of this monster of the desert, which had been purchased from the Indian borderers, and was now roaming about a natural cavern of considerable extent, enclosed only on the outside by a grating. With the aid of the hunting-spear which he carried with him, Lucius let himself down into the neighbourhood of the monster. But while thus occupied, a noise at a distance recalled to him the danger of being found within the emperor's hunting-ground. Concealing himself be-

hind a large tree, which grew close to the den, he saw a party approach, who had been employed apparently in the pursuit of smaller game. Their chief, whom Lucius knew at once to be the Cæsar Galerius, was accompanied by a younger man, whom he seemed to treat with considerable attention. The Cæsar's companion wore a soldier's dress, and his appearance bespoke resolution without ferocity. His tall and manly figure was set off by an open and attractive countenance. His age appeared to be that in which the activity of youth had lately ripened into the firmness of manhood. He might be somewhat under thirty; and if a broad and sinewy frame promised great strength, yet the management of his horse shewed it to be equalled by his agility.

Lucius had good opportunity for observing the two first persons in the party; for when they came opposite the den, they reined up their horses.

Galerius, turning to the other, said: "Here is the wild beast I promised to shew you; look at him well, and see if you hold to what you asserted, that a brave man, well armed, would be too much for him."

The beast seemed as if he divined what was passing; for he opened his enormous mouth with a wide yawn, and then suddenly changing, like the sea during a hurricane, from rest to fury, he erected his shaggy mane, drew up his wrinkled lips and displayed his vast teeth, as with a short deep snarl he rushed against the bars of his den. Galerius's horse started aside at the sound, so that, though a good

horseman, he was nearly dismounted; but the other did not seem daunted.

"What I said, I will maintain," he answered, "that with this couple of good hunting-spears I should not hesitate, were there any necessity, to attack this monster of the forest."

Lucius could see from his hiding-place, that in the sinister features of Galerius there was a mingled expression of malignity and satisfaction which augured no good to his companion.

"Why, you should have been the grandson of Maximian yourself," he said; "for you have a better right to his name of Hercules than any of your father's other sons."

"The son of Constantius," said the other haughtily, "needs no higher descent."

"And yet," said Galerius, with a sneer, "I have a shrewd notion that you would gallop for it as well as any one, if we were to turn this creature out to try the sharpness of our hunting-spears. I can see that you are getting ready to make off as soon as the den shall be opened."

Galerius's insinuation evidently provoked his companion; for, without deigning any reply, he alighted to put something right which was out of place in his bridle. Galerius pretended not to see that he was dismounted; and, riding close to the den, drew back its bolt, so as to allow the beast a passage.

"Now, Constantine," he cried, turning round towards him, "mount, and keep clear of his first spring!"

. His companion looked back, and saw the door of the den open, at a few paces behind him. If he attempted to mount, he felt assured that the lion would be upon him before he gained his saddle: indeed the beast seemed as though in act to spring. Happily he had rested his two hunting-spears against the fore-quarter of his horse, within reach of his arm. Grasping one of them, he threw it with so just an aim, that it wounded the lion in a mortal part. But the huge monster had strength left for one fatal bound against his opponent. His victim, however, was not unprepared. Springing sideways to the great tree which grew near the den, he received the beast upon his remaining spear, the back part of which he rested upon its roots. Though its stock was thick, and intended apparently for such a purpose, yet such was the weight of the animal that Lucius, as he stood behind the tree, could hear it crack and break. The rock rising too abruptly on the other side of the tree to allow the man to ascend, he could do nothing but slip aside into the narrow crevice which intervened between the tree and the den, and called out to Galerius to throw him his hunting-spear, that he might despatch the creature. But Galerius, who, when he opened the door, had motioned his followers to some little distance, kept aloof himself, crying out, whether truly or not, that his horse was frightened by the affray. His companion's horse had galloped off at the first spring of the lion. The beast would in a moment have de-

spatched his now unarmed opponent, had not Lucius, at the instant, quitted his hiding-place, and presented his hunting-spear through the crevice, which, at a few feet from the ground, was wide enough to admit his arm. It came just in time. The man, who had retreated as far back as he could, caught it with his left hand, and thrust it down the throat of the beast, as it once more flew open-mouthed upon him. Its expiring strength yielded before his vigorous arm, and the creature lay dead before him.¹

He had now time to think of his deliverer, whose situation he understood in a moment. "Save yourself," he said, "if you can, among the rocks behind; and remember that it is the prince Constantine who is your debtor." Lucius saw his danger; for Galerius and his attendants were by this time coming up, and the service which he had rendered to Constantine was not likely to conciliate the Cæsar towards an intruder; he must look to himself, therefore, for escape. On the side where he stood, nothing but a single rock intervened between the cavern and the precipice, which overhung the sea. In that part it was tolerably accessible, so that, springing up it, he was

¹ "Il [Galère] l'exposa [Constantin] aux bêtes, sous prétexte de divertissement et d'exercice. Praxagore, auteur païen, qui a fait en deux livres l'histoire des premières années de Constantin, et qui écrivait, selon Vossius, de son temps même ou sous ses enfans, dit que Galère l'obligea de combattre contre un lion furieux, dont il vint néanmoins à bout, et le tua."—*Tillemont, Constantin*, § 6.

at the top in a moment ; and before the huntsmen, who shouted so soon as they saw him, could let fly their arrows, he had plunged from the cliff into the sea. He threw himself as far forward as possible, fearing only hidden rocks ; and the splash which he made as he sunk into deep water was the only indication to his pursuers of his course. He had been well accustomed to this exercise on the bold coasts of his own country, and had often leapt, for sport, from rocks as lofty ; so that he found no difficulty in turning, so soon as he was under water, and in emerging close to the shore, where projecting rocks covered him above. He floated here, with nothing but his head above water, till he heard the hunters gradually leave the rocks ; some intimating that he was a water-god, who had come to aid prince Constantine, and others that he had been entangled in the weeds at the bottom. None ventured to follow him down the cliff ; and as the face of the rocks formed a promontory in the sea, no view could be obtained of them except from the opposite shore. To it Lucius swam so soon as all his pursuers were departed ; and returned home with no loss, save that of his favourite hunting-spear.

The next morning brought the news that Constantine had returned to his quarters near Nicomedia, and that on the preceding day he had slain a lion, by the especial aid, as some said, of Castor and Pollux. Anthimus, who knew of Lucius's prospects, was now the first to advise that he should try and gain

admission to the prince. Never did the young man more grudge the loss of his letters than when he found himself at the quarters of Constantine's legion, and was refused admittance unless he would state his business. But here his British birth stood him in stead. He said he was a subject of Constantius, a native of York, one of his favourite cities, and that he had a special errand for the emperor's son. But when this point was gained, and he was admitted to the prince's tent, how should he begin? His embarrassment was over when he saw his own hunting-spear, the companion of his sports at home, in the corner of the tent. Going up to it, he said, as he made obeisance to the prince: "I am come to reclaim my favourite weapon." Constantine instantly recognised his friend of yesterday. After blaming him for the risk he had encountered in entering the emperor's hunting-ground, "I had anticipated," he said, "from the inscription on your weapon, that you were from my father's province, and felt doubly interested in your escape."

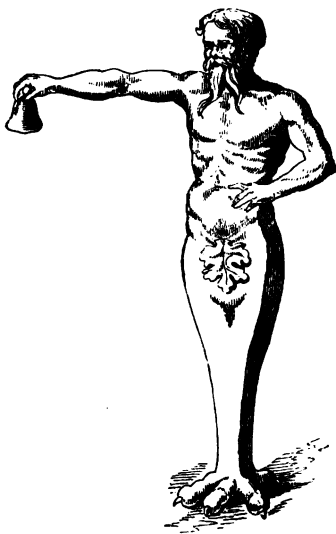
Lucius, thus encouraged, told his whole history; that his recommendations to Constantius had perished in the fire at the palace; and that, failing in his hopes from Dorotheus, he was at present dependent on the charity of the Christian bishop."

"You are yourself then, I presume, a Christian?" said Constantine.

"No, I am not," said Lucius; "though the charity which has been exercised towards a stranger like

myself is a powerful argument with me in favour of the Christians."

"It is well that you remain as you are," said Constantine. "The emperor's orders do not allow me to prefer any man to military rank who does not sacrifice to the tutelary gods. But come with me to-morrow: to say nothing of the service you have already rendered me, I shall be glad to be accompanied by one of my father's subjects."



Priapus. From the Antique.

Vide p. 69.

CHAPTER IV.

The Conflagration.

Noise, call you it, or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perished ?
Blood, death, and deathful deeds, are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction, at the utmost point.

Samson Agonistes.

WITH a joyous heart did Lucius leave Nicomedia a few days after the last conversation, riding in the train of Constantine, and already entrusted with a command among his troops. The short period since his arrival at the capital had been so prolific in incidents, that he could scarce believe that but a month previously he had sailed into its harbour full of expectation from the pleasures and interests of a palace and a great city. And now he left them, sick of the heartlessness of the one, and of the solitude which he had experienced amidst the crowded streets of the other. Far different was his life in the service of Constantine. He was stationed with a small force in a somewhat wild part of Phrygia, where his office was to guard against those predatory incursions which were occasionally made by bands of brigands from the north-eastern portion of Asia Minor. Here his time passed pleasantly enough, in a cheerful and rather romantic country, while his business led him

to pay occasional visits to the adjoining towns. During one of these he fell in with a person whom he had formerly met with in the house of Anthimus. He remembered that on that occasion the man's appearance had marked him out as a person of distinction, and there was still something striking in his manner, though his dress was now squalid and neglected. The man evidently avoided him, until accosted in a friendly manner, and reminded of the place of their meeting.

"In such times as these," he then said, "every one whom we meet, but especially those who bear any public office, may be seeking our lives."

Lucius immediately understood that he was flying from persecution, and was glad to hear something respecting the events in the capital, concerning which little had found its way into that remote neighbourhood.

"All the great towns," said the man, "all Syria and Egypt, are one scene of slaughter. Anthimus, the excellent bishop, at whose house I met you, has been beheaded. The emperor's attendants, Dorotheus and others, who were most in his favour, have not been allowed so easy a death. They have perished either by torture or by fire. Several hundred, after being cruelly tortured, have been sent, mutilated or maimed, to the mines. And I only," he added, "have escaped alone to tell thee."

Lucius now found fresh causes for thankfulness at having been removed from the sight of such an

afflicting scene. In his secluded region he had heard nothing but that many Christians had been punished, and their worship prohibited.

“In this country,” he said to the Christian, “your opinions have not spread at all through the villages; and the small towns which lie to the northward of us are so shut off from all communication, that I have heard of no attempt at enforcing the emperor’s edict there. Indeed, I know not whether they contain any Christians.”

His companion made no reply, and seemed to shun further conversation. But Lucius, who was pleased with his manners, and thought from his appearance that he needed assistance, would not allow himself to be thus repulsed. Calling up his servants, who were leading a spare horse, he insisted that the wanderer should mount, and ride with him. As they were crossing one of those barren plains which are to be found in the heart of Phrygia, the traveller could not refuse to accept his offer.

“Wearied as you plainly are,” said Lucius, “you will scarce be able on foot to reach a resting-place before night.”

They soon approached a wooded glen, where the servants of Lucius produced the provisions which they had brought for the day’s meal; and the stranger’s appetite shewed that he had cause to be thankful for Lucius’s kindness. He had been wandering for some time in utter destitution, having allowed to escape from torture by the sacrifice

of his whole property, and was on his way to seek shelter with some distant relations. When his strength was somewhat restored by food, he grew communicative, and gave a more detailed account of the fearful scenes which had been passing in all the great cities of the East. The young Briton made no scruple of expressing the favourable impressions which had been produced upon him by what he had himself witnessed in the house of Anthimus, and deplored the ferocities into which the seemingly mild nature of Dioclesian had been betrayed.

“ You must abandon, however,” he added, “ the confidence which your party used to express, that your system could not be suppressed, and that the power of Rome would be put to the worst before it.”

“ By no means,” said the Christian; “ we are but the more filled with the confidence which we ever possessed.”

“ Are not your churches shut up or destroyed? Is not your public worship at an end? Are not your bishops put to death, or banished to the mines? Are you not blotted out of the nations? You have just told me that the emperor designs to erect a column in memory of the utter extinction of the Christian name.”

At the moment when Lucius uttered these words, the travellers had reached a more cultivated part of the plain, where a few enclosed spots had lately been sown with maize. The Christian pointed towards them, and said, “ What if winter were here to set up

his icy columns in token of his victory over last year's herbage? We have a proverb, 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.' So will the emperor find it. But the greatness of Rome, its wealth and fame, are doomed, as your own prophets declare, to a speedy overthrow; and the temporary victory of antichrist makes me believe it at hand."

"But what are your people doing?" said Lucius; "which of them has made any opposition? Have they not submitted in silence to the emperor's command?"

"The Christians have offered no opposition to the emperor's laws, because they are taught to honour every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. Nothing can be more at variance with their principles than that stubborn resistance to oppression, and that love of independence, which heathen writers so highly praise. These they leave to worldly men; yet you would find that they were never more firmly joined together in one body than at present; nor was their faith ever stronger in the permanent existence of their Church."

"What proofs do they give of it?" said Lucius.

"The interest they take in one another's endurance is a proof of that united feeling which is the never-failing sign of Christ's Church; and their faith is shewn by their enforcing, even more strongly than at other times, those rules of discipline which exclude offenders from their communion."

Lucius remembered the scene which he had wit-

nessed in the house of Anthimus, and was curious to learn something further on the subject. "Perhaps," said his companion, "I may be able to give you some proof of this, if you are making any stay in the town which we are approaching."

Their arrival at the town where Lucius meant to halt broke off their conversation; but during the days he remained there, he had several opportunities of meeting the Christian. The stranger, had found friends in this distant quarter, and seemed no longer in want. "You know," he said, "that we Christians have every where connexions: our baptism is a tie of brotherhood; and though my relations have removed from the neighbourhood, yet I have been received as a brother." Lucius was impressed with a circumstance which harmonised so well with the letter which he had brought from home, and pressed to know more of persons who had among them so attractive a principle, in which the world around was so grievously defective. "I have neither friends nor relations within some thousand miles," he said, "though there are many who pretend good-will to me, now that I am a prince's favourite; yet I would fain know something of persons who have this friendly feeling towards a fugitive. It must be a strange thing, this baptism of yours, which makes all men of one blood."

The Christian was at first unwilling to make him acquainted with the place to which his brethren resorted. "Though no open persecution has commenced

here, yet we think it prudent to meet in secrecy, lest we draw on us the attention of the magistrates." When satisfied that Lucius was not actuated by any unfriendly motive, and informed that in Britain he had occasionally been present at parts of the Christian service, he took him as a spectator of the more public portion of their worship. It was conducted in a cavern near the town; and Lucius observed that the prayer for the emperor, which he had heard formerly in Christian churches in Britain, was not discontinued. When looking round on the assembly, he felt convinced that many persons were present who must be visitants from distant parts. He told his surmise to his fellow-traveller, when they met next day, and asked him likewise, what were the rules of discipline to which he had alluded in their first conversation.

"That, I think, I can shew you," said the other, "if you will go with me to a house where the bishops and clergy of the neighbourhood will shortly assemble."

Lucius accompanied him. Two bishops were present, sitting on raised seats in front; behind them sat the priests; the deacons and people stood around. The persons whom Lucius had seen the preceding evening, and taken to be strangers, were there. The subject in discussion proved to be, whether these persons might be admitted to the Holy Communion. This the bishops were to decide. They occasionally referred to the priests; but the deacons and people took no part, except as spectators.

"You, my friends," said one of the bishops, "have come to us from various cities, having either undergone, or fled from persecution. But since the martyrdom of our holy brethren, the bishops of your several Churches, prevents you from bringing us commendatory letters, as proofs that you are indeed members of the Church's communion, and since it is said that some have failed in the fiery trial, and therefore need the discipline of repentance before they can be admitted to their place as members in the Lord, we desire to learn what has befallen each of you."

The first who came forward was a man of reverend appearance, who was evidently suffering from some great bodily infirmity, as it was only with the help of two persons that he could advance into the circle. "I bear about me," he said, "the marks of the Lord Jesus," at the same time shewing his foot, which had been so cruelly burnt as to render him a cripple for life. "They demanded the sacred books for the fire—those 'useless writings,' as they profanely called them. 'You may burn me,' I replied. By favour of one of the emperor's officers I was dismissed thus mangled."

Respecting this person's acceptance there was no question. He was followed by two others, who seemed to be regarded with more doubt. "We have heard respecting you, my brethren," said the bishop, "that though you suffered great cruelty from the heathen, yet that at last you took that which was

profane in your hands, even if you did not defile your mouths with words of treachery."

The persons to whom this was spoken stood next to one another, but their different manner indicated that their condition was widely distinct. Both were elderly men of serious and thoughtful countenance. Both had the appearance of having suffered bodily injury. In neither was there any shade of self-conceit. But while one was calm, quiet, and cheerful, the other was evidently labouring under some deep and disturbing emotions. The former spoke first. "I can call God to witness," he said, "that no words of mine, nor even my silence, gave any countenance to what was done by the heathen. When I was brought before the judge, I refused to sacrifice, as those around me witnessed; and when frankincense was put into my hands by force, my voice still testified that I took no part in the proceeding. At length, when I fainted under the blows which were heaped upon me, I was drawn forth by the feet from among the crowd which surrounded the tribunal; and if the soldiers who removed me said that I had sacrificed, it was without my knowledge and consent."

"I wish," said the other who stood by him, "that I could clear myself of guilt as well as my brother and companion. I was taken with him before the tribunal, and refused to sacrifice; but at length, overcome by the blows of my tormentors, when frankincense was put into my hands by a soldier who stood

near, I allowed him to say that I had sacrificed, and thus became, in some sort, partaker in their sins."

Lucius was much interested with a proceeding which shewed how little the Christians had relaxed the exactness of their rules even during the height of persecution. The first of these two parties was admitted, he found, at once into communion; but the second was ordered to wait for six months as a penitent in the exterior part of the church, before he could participate in the full privileges of Christian communion. Others there were who were subjected to a longer trial. One person, who had given up the sacred books, was deprived for ten years of admission to the communion; while some who had yielded without necessity were sentenced to take their places for three years with those who were only hearers in the outer division of the church, then to continue for seven years in the class of penitents, and finally to worship for two years with the faithful before they participated in the holy eucharist.¹

Lucius could not help expressing surprise, when he and his friend were alone together, that the strictness of the Christian rules should not be somewhat modified during the severity of persecution. "It speaks great boldness in your rulers," he said, "that they should not be afraid of disgusting persons, at a moment when so little is to be gained by continuing in your ranks."

¹ This was the sentence of the Council of Nice in its 11th canon.

“We consider that never was the time when more was to be acquired,” said the other. “The blessings which the Church has to give are of a spiritual nature—the peace of God in this world, everlasting joy in the next. When were these more near at hand? And we have ever found that the Church has flourished most when its discipline has been most rigid. It is like those trees which shoot the stronger, the more they feel the pruning-knife. For its strength does not lie in the soft and careless, but in serious and self-denying spirits. However,” he added, “these persons may obtain an abatement of their time of penance, either through the obvious sincerity of their own repentance, or the intercession of others. In this place, moreover, the fire of persecution has not yet begun to burn, perhaps never may; indeed, there is a town at no great distance, which, being entirely secluded, and happening to be under a Christian magistrate, still enjoys the advantages of public worship without fear or concealment.”

Lucius often thought of this last statement, when, on his return next day to his own quarters, he was told that a new Roman deputy had arrived at the seat of government, whose orders were, to see the imperial commands respecting religion more strictly obeyed. His own troops, and the other legions in the neighbourhood, were to hold themselves ready to aid the civil power. And now various acts of cruelty were committed in his own immediate neighbourhood, although the aid of the soldiery was not at

first required. After a few weeks, however, he received a summons which made him fear lest he should be called upon to take part in them. He was ordered to occupy a position near a town about forty miles to the north-eastward of his quarters. Though not as yet alienated from heathenism, he had seen enough of the Christians to resolve that nothing should induce him to stain his hands with their blood. Whatever loss or danger he might draw upon himself, this was his firm resolve. Happily another legion was ordered out before him; so that when he took part on the heights where he was commanded to array his troops, he found that he was only wanted to cover the retreat of the assailants. He soon learnt that the neighbouring town was that of which he had heard as enjoying the signal advantage of a Christian magistrate, and the unrestricted exercise of its public worship. The rocks upon which he was standing so completely overlooked the place, that it might almost have been used for military operations, had not the difficulty of the ground through which they had passed prevented the troops from bringing with them their heavier engines. He could see, therefore, every thing that passed within, and observe that the church, which stood in the centre of the town, was at this time open for worship. Close before the walls of the place was ranged the legion which had preceded his own, commanded by the chief authorities of the province. They evidently expected opposition, as the town was strong

from its natural position, as well as from the union which prevailed among its inhabitants. Being situated on the frontiers of the empire, it required fortifications for its security against the surrounding barbarians.

Considering the mountainous nature of the country, and the difficulty of obtaining provisions, together with the risk which might be apprehended, supposing any of the adjoining tribes were to cut off their retreat, Lucius thought it very likely that the attack would be abandoned, if the besieged shewed any resolution in their own defence.

With these expectations he looked on with considerable hope that the attempt against the place would be unsuccessful ; a hope which was increased by information that the ground all round the city had been surveyed, and found nearly inaccessible. " And if the Christians are successful in this place," he said to himself, " who knows that it may not encourage them to self-defence in others ? They form the decided majority in many parts of the country ; and whereas the empire is divided into various portions, and ruled by persons who have little affection towards one another, they are one body wherever they are dispersed. There can be little doubt that Constantius would be well pleased were Galerius to be hampered in his proceedings by a Christian insurrection."

Such were Lucius's thoughts as he saw the troops of the empire form under the walls, and a herald ad-

vance to the gates of the city to demand admission in the name of the emperor. But what was his surprise and disappointment, when a person advanced upon the walls, and proclaimed aloud, that though the Christians of the place would rather forfeit their lives than take part in any idolatrous service, yet that, as their religion taught them to obey their temporal prince, they should immediately open the gates to the troops of the emperor. No sooner was this done, than the soldiery rushed in. The streets and houses they found deserted. All the city, it seemed, was assembled in the large church which Lucius had seen. The royal deputy entered it, and called upon the governor and the chief citizens to take part, according to the emperor's order, in a heathen sacrifice. "You have opened your gates at the prince's summons; now open your hearts to his command." "Here," said the chief man of the place, "we cannot obey him. To Cæsar we have rendered what was Cæsar's—we must give what is God's to God." The whole assembly, in whose hearing the words were uttered, repeated with one voice, "Amen." The distant sound of their response could be heard as far as the station where Lucius was anxiously waiting the result.

The fervour and unity of the people only inflamed the anger of the deputy. "You must take the consequence," he said. Rushing out of the church, he posted a detachment of soldiers before its doors. Lucius could see this step from the high

ground which he occupied. What could it portend? He could not design the massacre of so large a body of persons. But his intention was speedily apparent. The doors of the church were no sooner shut, than he ordered them to be nailed up securely on the outside. A body of soldiers then dispersed into the adjoining houses. Lucius supposed that the property of the Christians was to be given up to pillage; and he had a little difficulty in keeping back his own soldiers, who desired to take part in the proceeding which was going on under their eyes. But soon he saw a tall centurion, who had been the first to lead the pillagers, return, carrying upon his shoulders the door of an adjacent building. He was followed by others with similar burdens. In a short time each side of the church was piled up with a confused heap of materials. It was a wooden structure, of rough but solid construction; its small windows somewhat high up in the walls. While all this was going on without, the low murmur, as of persons engaged in prayer, mixed with the occasional burst of a chanted psalm, proceeded from the building, alternating, like the sound of a waterfall on a stormy night—the deep sound waxing more full and distinct at each occasional hush of the tempest. But this sound was speedily overmastered by one far more awful to those who have ever heard it. The loud crackling of flames arose from the wood and furniture on the sides of the building, to which the tall centurion had now set fire. A moment more, and the

walls of the church had kindled. The view from above into the town, which had hitherto been so distinct, that Lucius could discern every step that was taken, was now obscured by volumes of smoke, which, meeting over the roof of the building, rose up thence towards heaven, as though to bear witness against the atrocity of the deed. Lucius looked around him; and as, in the stillness of a clear evening, he saw the vast mass of smoke ascend in a compact column, till, reaching the level of the lofty mountains among which the city was situate, it was gradually dissipated by some currents of air which were moving in the upper sky, he thought, that if there were any truth in what he had heard respecting the interference of superior beings, it must be in the prevention of such a wickedness, thus publicly acted before earth and heaven. He lived afterwards to see the footsteps of God's providence in the signal fate of those to whom these fearful scenes were to be attributed; but for this doomed city there was no earthly relief, nor any present intercessor. The shrieks of the miserable victims, as the fire gradually made its way into the interior of the building, which even the roaring of the flames could not drown, haunted him for weeks to come. A flaw of wind, which opened a passage through the smoky curtains which enveloped the place, shewed him the fate of a few persons who had forced their way through the windows of the building, to perish by the weapons of the surrounding soldiery, or be thrown back by them into the

flames. Lucius had hid his face, when he was recalled by a dull and heavy sound, as the rafters of the roof fell in together. There was one cry of deep but smothered agony, and then all was still, save that a vast gush of fire rose up for a moment with more than its usual intensity. Then came the shout of the victors, as their work of wrath was over, and the human sacrifice complete.¹

¹ This occurrence is mentioned by two contemporary historians, Eusebius and Lactantius.

“ At that time,” says the first, “ soldiers surrounded a city in Phrygia, and burnt the inhabitants, men, women, and children, while they called upon Christ the supreme God. For the whole inhabitants of the city, the treasurer, and governor, and magistrates, refused to obey those who ordered them to sacrifice to idols.” viii. 11.

Lactantius says, that the governor of Phrygia “ burnt the people, with their place of assembling.”—*Ins. Div.* v. 11.

CHAPTER V.

The Flight.

Why rather, Sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,—
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lull'd with sounds of sweetest melody?

SHAKESPEARE.

LUCIUS's first step, when he returned to quarters, was to solicit leave of absence, with a view of making a visit to Nicomedia. His purpose was to resign his command, even though he forfeited the favour of Constantine, lest he should be called upon, in the exercise of his duty, to take part in such scenes as he had just witnessed. After two years of absence, therefore, he was once more walking the streets of Nicomedia. It was towards the conclusion of April. When he had ascertained that Constantine was not in the city, but was expected to arrive there the next day, he walked forth to see what changes had taken place since his last visit to the capital. He passed the house of Anthimus and the site of his church—where the very buildings which he remembered had

been succeeded by new edifices—and then proceeded to the square which lay in front of the palace. As he was walking there, he heard his name pronounced, and had the pleasure of greeting his old comrade Gallus. “You find me,” said Gallus, “better off in the world than when you went away. I had friends in the palace who more than made up for the loss of my poor master Dorotheus. If you are willing to share my hospitality again, I can make you more comfortable than I did.”

“And without the sight either of fire or torture, I hope,” said the other.

“Don’t speak of such things,” said Gallus; “to those who have witnessed what I have, they are too painful to remember.”

Lucius readily accepted the invitation, which his old comrade gave in a very friendly manner; and a few minutes found him again in the palace of the Cæsars. The two companions told one another all that had passed since their last meeting. The circumstances in which they had then been placed had given them great confidence in one another; and Lucius did not hesitate to mention why he had come to the capital, and to detail the fearful scenes he had witnessed. Gallus had as painful a story to unfold in the dreadful tortures to which Dorotheus and the other Christian officers of the palace had been subjected. The cruelties which he had witnessed had evidently given him the greatest disgust of Galerius, to whose instrumentality he referred them; and he

looked upon Constantine as the only hope of better things in the imperial family. The prospect of his succession to the crown, if Dioclesian, who had lately been ill, should abandon the sceptre, was discussed between them.

“Dioclesian has always shewn Constantine much favour,” said Lucius, “and his father Constantius is the elder of the Cæsars.”

“I have but one fear,” replied the other; “lest Galerius, who is present, should have such influence with the emperor as to defeat Constantine’s claims. You know how constantly Galerius has sought his destruction. It was, no doubt, with this view that he urged him into that battle with a lion, out of which he got so marvellously.”

Lucius now told his friend, what he had never communicated to any one, the part he had himself taken in this transaction, and how it had influenced his fortunes.

“I have a great mind,” said Gallus, “to be equally communicative to you. I think I could guess what is going on at this very time in respect to the imperial succession.”

Lucius pressed him to communicate what he knew.

“You may remember,” said Gallus, “those secret conferences which the emperor had, the winter before the persecution of the Christians began; and if you have not forgotten a certain secret passage which ran by the emperor’s apartments, you may know

how we came to divine something of their purport. Now similar consultations are a-foot at present; and the emperor's resignation I take to be their design."

"You would greatly further the interests of Constantine," said Lucius, "if you would use the opportunity you possess to give him notice of any plots which may be laid against him."

Gallus's own inclinations were so much on Constantine's side, that he needed little pressing to decide him to take part directly in his favour.

"Why should we not learn at once what is passing?" said Lucius.

"You must walk cautiously," said Gallus; "the sword of Damocles is over your head." Thus speaking, he led the way to the very passage through which he had once before guided Lucius, when he left the palace. It was a vacancy behind the wall of the emperor's apartments, originally left with a view of leading to another chamber, but now accessible only through a hole which opened into another room, in which the emperor occasionally slept. This hole had been carefully stopped with a panel by some one who perceived the use which might be made of the passage, and a curtain hanging in front effectually concealed the place from observation. The passage led, at the other end, to the secret door by which Lucius had formerly escaped; but as this door opened only from within, the two friends were obliged to enter the passage from the bed-room. Yet as Gal-

lus's office often led him there, they passed unchallenged; and thus they heard part of a conference, which, as it is reported by a contemporary historian,¹ must ere long have found its way to the public. The Cæsar Galerius was pressing his father-in-law, Dioclesian, to resign the empire, alleging that he was weary of his fifteen years' service in Illyricum and against the barbarians of the Danube, and thought it time that he should rise to the higher title of Augustus. It was understood that Maximian, who, with Dioclesian, had hitherto borne this higher title, was ready also to resign. Constantius and Galerius would then succeed their two fathers-in-law in the title of Augustus, and two new Cæsars must be appointed.

"Well," said Dioclesian, "let it be; but, at all events, new Cæsars must be chosen according to the common opinion of all of us."

Galerius. "What is the use of taking opinions, when the two others must needs acquiesce in what we shall have done?"

Maximian's son, Maxentius, was of so ferocious a nature, that neither his relations nor the public desired his elevation; of him, therefore, there was no thought: but Dioclesian immediately mentioned Constantine, as being popular not only with the soldiers and people, but with himself. Galerius, however, cut him short. "He is not worthy. Even as a

¹ Lactantius de M. P. § 18.

private man, he despised me ; what will he do if he comes to be emperor ? ”

“ And yet,” said Dioclesian, “ he is amiable ; and would govern so as to be considered even better and more amiable than his father.”

“ The consequence would be,” said Galerius, “ that he would thwart all my wishes.”

Dioclesian. “ Whom would you have, then ? ”

“ Severus,” said the other.

Dioclesian. “ What ! that drunken fool, who makes night into day, and day into night ? ”

Galerius. “ He is a fit man, and his liberality has gained the soldiers. I have already sent him to Maximian, to be declared his successor.”

Dioclesian. “ Well, whom would you name for the second ? ”

“ Daia,” said Galerius, — referring to a half-barbarian youth, whom he had lately raised from the situation of a herdsman to be a tribune in the army, and to whom he had given the name of Maximin.

“ Who is *he* ? ” said Dioclesian.

“ He is my relation,” replied the other.

Dioclesian (with a sigh). “ You don’t give me fit men to undertake the care of the commonwealth.”

Galerius. “ I have made good proof of them.”

Dioclesian. “ The loss will be mainly yours, on whom the care of the government will chiefly fall.

I have taken pains, so long as I could hold it, for the safety of the state. If any reverse befalls it, the fault will not be mine."

After hearing this singular conference, Lucius was doubly anxious to see Constantine, and to explain to him the machinations of his enemies. But the prince was not to be found till, towards the middle of the next day, Lucius saw him at a public assembly, to which the soldiery of all the legions in the neighbourhood were summoned. Constantine, who had been into the country, returned just in time to attend it. The place of meeting was near a lofty column, crowned with a statue of Jupiter, which had been erected as a memorial that in an elevated rostrum in that very place Galerius himself had first been presented to the soldiery in his imperial dress. The rumour spread that Dioclesian would that day take a step, which he was known to have been meditating, and resign a sceptre which was become too burdensome for his declining years. All looked to Constantine as his successor. The soldiers were expressing their hopes of his elevation, and Lucius was in vain endeavouring to make his way up to him, when a sudden call to silence announced the appearance of the aged emperor. Ascending the rostrum, he said, with tears, that his broken health required rest; that he must now commit the sceptre to firmer hands, and appoint fresh Cæsars. At this point, every one's expectation was raised to the utmost pitch. What was the astonishment of all

who were present, with the exception of Lucius, who knew the resolve which had been taken, when he declared that Severus and Maximin were Cæsars. Severus was well known ; but as for Maximin, men were at a loss to know who was meant by him. Some supposed that Constantine, whose father was Maximian's son-in-law, had received that name. But Constantine, who was on the rostrum, near the emperor, stood mute ; while Galerius, reaching forth his hand, drew Daia from behind him, and, to the amazement of all, he was invested with the royal purple. People began to ask who he was, and whence came he. But so sudden was the blow, that no voice was raised in opposition. Meanwhile Dioclesian descended from the rostrum, well satisfied, as it seemed, with his own escape from the cares of office ; and saying that he might now return to his original name of Diocles, he left the capital for the town of Salona, in his native Illyria.

But though Lucius's information had not enabled Constantine to take any steps for averting the injury which was thus done him, yet it was not without its value. From perceiving the full extent of Galerius's hostility, he learnt that his safety could only be secured by his departure from the imperial court. Till this could be effected, he begged Lucius to continue at his quarters in the palace, where Gallus willingly allowed him to remain.

But Constantine's course was not so easy as might be expected. When he mentioned to Galerius,

that he wished to visit his father Constantius, the emperor put him off by various pretexts. Constantius, whose health had now begun to fail, wrote to the emperor to beg that his son might be sent to him. Still Galerius refused. And as further accounts indicated that Constantius's death might ere long be expected, it became manifest that he was kept in order that he might be deprived of any share of his inheritance, and be put to death so soon as his father's decease might free Galerius from fear of retaliation.

And now all the attempts which Galerius had before made for his destruction came to his recollection. His only hope lay in flight. But how to effect this was the difficulty. No one might leave Nicomedia without the emperor's permission; and what chance was there of distancing his pursuers, when nearly a thousand miles were to be passed before he entered his father's province? On this subject Constantine had many conferences with Lucius, and with Gallus, who had now been introduced to the prince's confidence. But before any steps could be taken, more pressing letters arrived from Constantius; and the emperor, fearful lest his colleague should take some strong steps upon his refusal, gave his consent to allow the young prince to depart. The seventh day from that time was fixed; as some time, it was said, was needful to make preparation for his journey. The preceding evening

arrived : Lucius, who was to attend him, had made every preparation ; the emperor's order for his departure was prepared and signed ; and all difficulty seemed over. But when Constantine applied next morning for the permission to depart, Galerius had torn it. " You must not go," he said, " to-day ;" and assigning some frivolous reason for delay, he would have him wait three days longer. Then also he had some further pretext, till the young prince, in despair, saw that there was a fixed design to detain him till his father's death should render his journey useless.

With this feeling he asked Gallus, the next time that Galerius had fixed a day for his going, whether it would not be possible to obtain the license by stealth from the emperor's cabinet, and to set off secretly during the night. Galerius, with a view of keeping up appearances, was accustomed to sign the pass which would enable him to leave the city ; but he uniformly destroyed it so soon as the day arrived. Gallus promised to acquaint himself where the document was kept ; and in the meantime Constantine, who had determined to make the attempt, ordered that horses should be in readiness for himself and Lucius on the European shore of the Propontis. Every thing, however, must depend on the possibility of obtaining the emperor's license, without which an attempt to leave the city would produce an immediate pursuit, which must of course be fatal.

Could he gain but twelve hours' start, Constantine thought that he might reach the European shore in safety ; and that done, he must trust to the speed of the horses which he had provided, and which would carry him, he expected, into the wilder parts of Thrace : once there, the open country would enable him to escape observation.

And now the day of enterprise arrived. Constantine was to leave the palace early in the evening, and, after waiting at a house in the town, was to meet his party at the western extremity of the palace ; while Lucius was to execute a scheme which his friend had devised for obtaining the necessary pass. It was matter both of difficulty and danger. Gallus had ascertained that the pass had always been kept in a small cabinet, accessible only through the emperor's bedroom ; but this bedroom was the very apartment in which terminated the secret passage before described. If Lucius could conceal himself in that passage, he might then enter the emperor's chamber, although its doors were both watched and bolted, and afterwards leave the palace by the secret exit, with which he was already acquainted.

The first difficulty was to hide Lucius in the secret passage. Gallus, who had access to the emperor's bedroom, concealed his friend in a cupboard which lay near it, and then, watching his opportunity, introduced him while the whole household were at their midday meal. Thus secreted, he must now trust to himself.

After watching the whole evening, he was assured, by the increasing silence,—for no light reached him,—that the night was coming on. Presently he could hear the emperor's chamberlains approach. They searched the bedroom, to see that no one was concealed there, and the moveable panel, near which Lucius was sitting, nearly fell out, as one of them struck the curtain before it with his wand, to make sure that no one was hiding behind it. And now came the emperor. He bade his domestics leave him undisturbed till late in the morning; adding, "If Constantine applies for his license to depart, he must wait my rising." A light was left burning in his room, by which Lucius, who knew exactly where the cabinet stood, saw that he should be able to approach it. When he thought, therefore, that the emperor might be asleep, he removed the panel. This was done without any noise; for he had already spread a curtain on the floor, lest the sound made by his laying it down should be perceptible. Then removing the curtain before him, he crept through the opening. And now he stood up by the bed; for the passage opened close to it. The light enabled him distinctly to survey the well-known features of the sleeper. There was his vast frame, rendered more gross by habitual intemperance—a countenance in which a rough intellect was not wanting, but where all traces of that good humour which might have been expected to accompany his boisterous nature

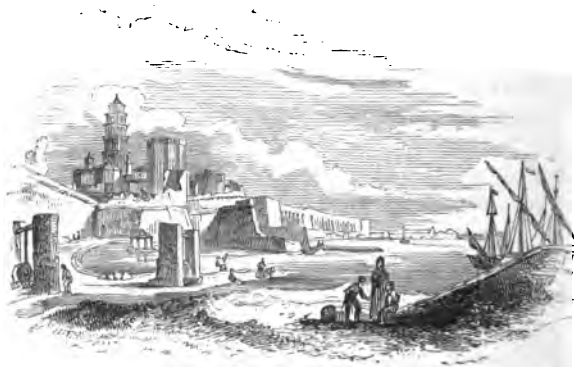
were effaced by habitual self-indulgence. Those eyes were closed which had so often glared with satisfaction on the agonies of his fellow-creatures. The mouth was open in his heavy sleep, from which had proceeded the doom of thousands. Nature seemed now to revenge her outraged laws; for he was evidently contending in feverish dreams with those pangs of remorse with which, in the commission of crimes, he seemed never to be troubled. Lucius's hand instinctively grasped the emperor's dagger, which lay beside him, and he felt a strong temptation to free the world of the tyrant who made it unhappy. But the lessons which he had learnt among the Christians recurred to his thoughts. Already had he so far adopted their opinions, that he was resolved to apply on the first opportunity for admission among the number of catechumens; and he remembered that the unlawfulness of assassination had been among the first points he had heard from them. Laying down, therefore, the emperor's dagger, he crept on his hands and knees across the chamber, so that, even if the sleeper awoke, he would be concealed from his sight. It was well he did so. Galerius, who had already started repeatedly from his sleep, seemed to detect the slight vibration which his movements communicated to the floor of the apartment, and sat up in his bed. But the light, which was near the emperor's couch, did not enable him to see Lucius, who got safely into the

cabinet. He found the license of departure as he expected; and after waiting for a time returned into the bedroom. But the emperor was still awake. There he lay, his large savage eyes glaring in the light of the lamp, which was burning near him. Lucius, who was standing behind a curtain near the door of the cabinet, was compelled to wait in perfect stillness, feeling that the least noise on his part would consign him to instant torture and death. Several times was he tempted to regret that he had omitted the opportunity of securing his return, which the dagger of the emperor afforded him. Sometimes he felt inclined to rush on the monster, and even now to attempt his destruction. The minutes which he had to wait seemed the longest which in his whole life he had ever known: by such a torture as this, he thought, an eternity might be coined out of a single hour. Every second seemed to increase the danger. After the steps which had been taken, it was impossible to go back in the design. Yet Constantine, he feared, would despair of his appearance, and perhaps return to the palace, to escape suspicion. And then all the hopes which he had cherished, and which seemed likely to be cut off, chased one another through his mind;—his distant home—his walks on the free hills of his happy country—his mother's kiss—his father's blessing—the great truths of which he had obscurely heard, and which he was now ready to believe would so mightily conduce to

his happiness. His mind, wearied with such thoughts began at length to recoil upon the overtaken powers of his body. He had been watching painfully ever since noon—his very excitement had fatigued him: the hot atmosphere of the room increased his lassitude. That sleep, which the emperor vainly courted, seemed to drop upon him its Lethæan dews. Yet if he moved, all was lost. In this painful struggle did he stand for two hours. But at length, O happiness,—the glaring eye, which he watched as the weary shepherd does the orb of day, began to grow dim. And now its pent-house gradually descended. Galerius slept. With tenfold caution the young Briton crept again across the apartment; and not till he replaced the panel which concealed his passage, did the sleeper give signs of being disturbed. That sound startled him. He rose, and called out. But Lucius was now in safety. As nothing was to be seen, the alarm subsided. After waiting a few minutes, to prevent its recurrence, he trod safely, yet gently, along the secret passage; and the hidden door once more let him forth into the streets of Nicomedia. A few paces from the place of meeting he found Constantine, almost as anxious as himself. A hasty recognition assured them that all was right.

The danger was now over. Long before the emperor arose on the following day, they were out of the reach of pursuit. What afterwards happened,—their speedy passage across Thrace,—their safe

arrival in Gaul,—the joy with which Constantius received his son at Boulogne,—his subsequent elevation to the imperial throne at York, is matter of public history. Such was the last flight of Constantine.

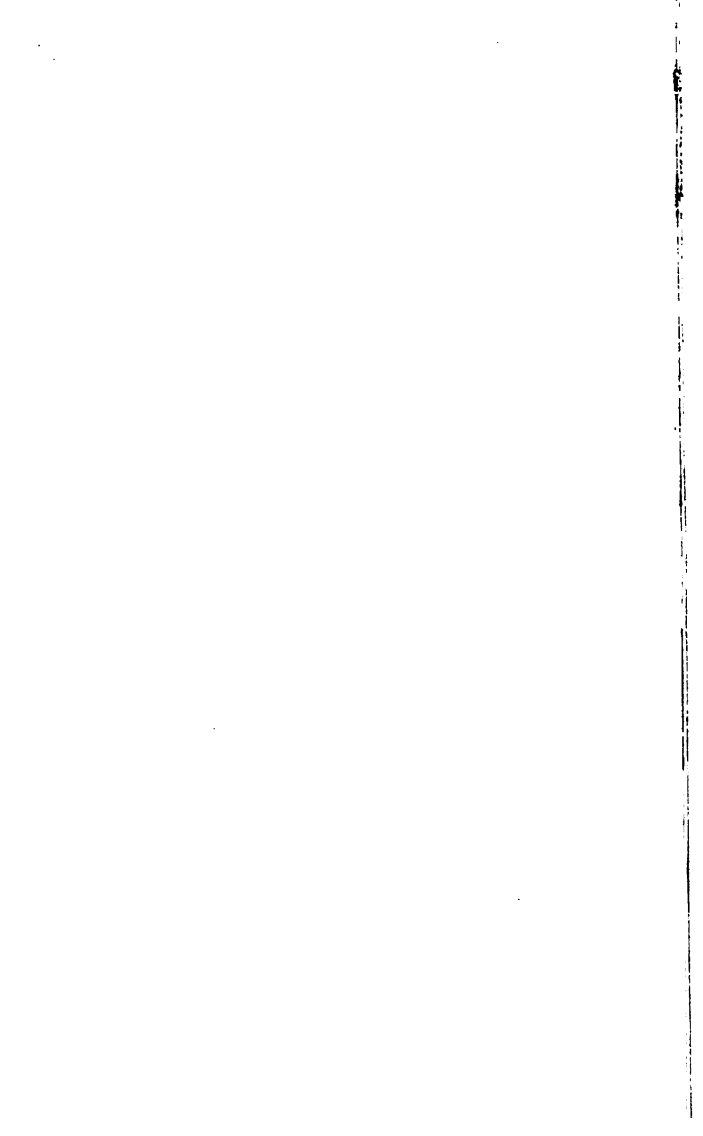


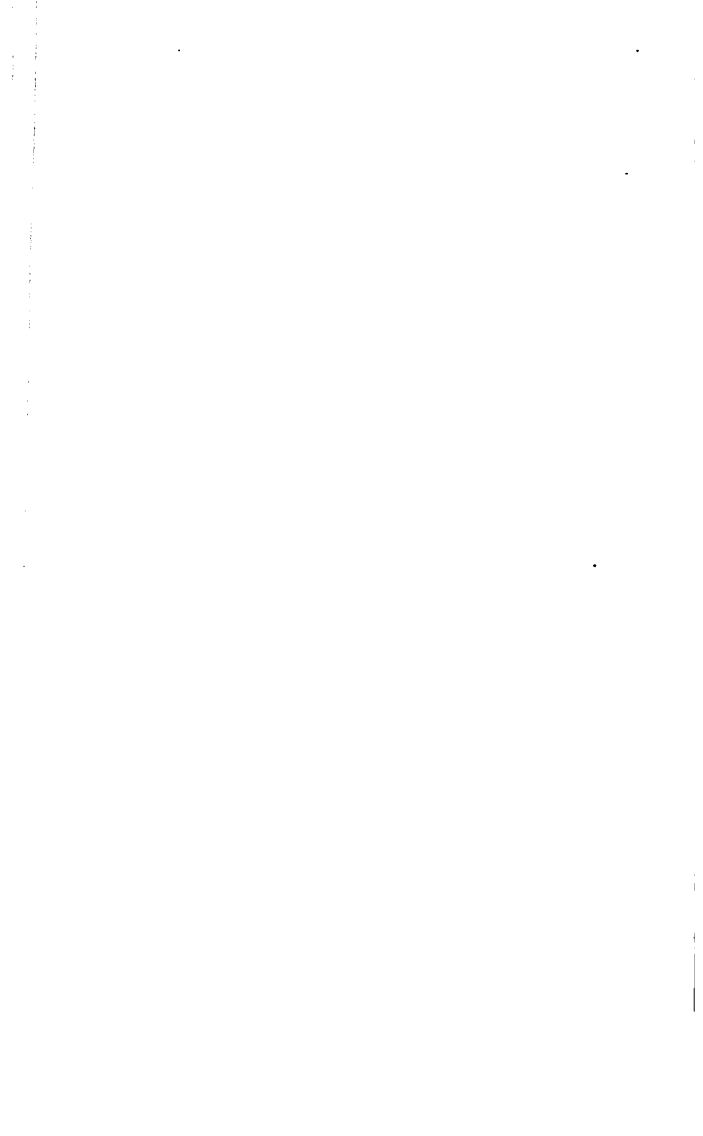
Ruins of Dioclesian's Villa at Salona.

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